AUTHORSHIP AND CULTURAL IDENTITY IN EARLY GREECE AND CHINA

PATTERNS OF LITERARY CIRCULATION

ALEXANDER BEECROFT

CAMBRIDGE

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In this book, Alexander Beecroft explores how the earliest poetry in Greece (Homeric epic and lyric) and China (the *Canon of Songs*) evolved from being local, oral, and anonymous to being textualized, interpreted, and circulated over increasingly wider areas. Beecroft reexamines representations of authorship as found in poetic biographies such as the *Lives of Homer* and the *Zuozhuan*, and in the works of other philosophical and historical authors such as Plato, Aristotle, Herodotus, Confucius, and Sima Qian. Many of these anecdotes and narratives have long been rejected as spurious or motivated by naïve biographical criticism. Beecroft argues that these texts effectively negotiated the tensions between local and pan-cultural audiences. The figure of the author thus served as a catalyst to a sense of shared cultural identity in both the Greek and Chinese worlds. It also facilitated the emergence of both cultures as the bases for cosmopolitan world orders.

Alexander Beecroft is Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature at Yale University. He has published on topics in Classics, Sinology, and Comparative Literature in journals such as *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, the *New Left Review*, and *Early Medieval China*.

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Introduction

The topic and the thesis of this book are each fairly simply stated: This book examines the development of the concept of authorship in early Greece and China, specifically with reference to Homer and Archaic lyric on the Greek side and to the *Canon of Songs*, or *Shi Jing* 詩經,[1] on the Chinese side. The thesis, put at its baldest, is that the concept of authorship in both cultures serves as a substitute for the sort of contextual information once provided in performance through such elements as music and dance, and through the ability of the audience to connect the performance they are witnessing to the community in which they live. The figure of the author, then, as represented in the *scenes of authorship*[2] that tend to form the core of our knowledge about these twin processes of creation, is used in the ancient world as a means of discussing in concrete form problems about the production, distribution, and value of literature. In particular, these scenes of authorship provide the basis on which ancient texts remained vital as they moved into new environments, not only through passage from performance to textuality, but also through the evolving and complex

[1] I introduce this, and other Chinese texts, to the non-Sinological reader in the final section of this Introduction.

[2] I discuss this term below; for the moment I offer the following definition: A scene of authorship is a narrative episode (or surviving fragment thereof) that purports to recount the composition or performance of a work of verbal art in such a way as to ground the interpretation and function of that work.

relationships between cultural and political boundaries that characterized both Greece and China.

Put another way, biographical anecdotes offer what I call *implied poetics*, a term that I define to include theories of literature not delivered as coherent manifestoes but rather revealed piecemeal and indirectly as they are enacted in the real or imagined lives of poets.[3] My claim is that intentionality is not necessary for a poetics to be discernible; unspoken assumptions about the production, circulation, and value of literature permeate biographical anecdotes, and much of my task in this book is to attempt to uncover those unspoken assumptions. I explore this theme elsewhere, where I show, for example, that debates about whether or not Homer was blind reflect implicit or explicit assumptions about the use of writing in the composition of Homeric epic.[4] These implied poetics, moreover, reveal (within and beyond individual anecdotes) a diversity of thinking on the problems they address, a diversity largely veiled if we concentrate our attention on more formal and foundational theoretical statements, such as Aristotle's *Poetics* and the Mao preface to the *Canon of Songs*, two texts that I examine in Chapter 1. I argue further that it is more fruitful to read these scenes of authorship as evidence of poetic ideology (explicit or implicit) than to read them merely as generated by the *biographical fallacy* – the tendency to construct lives of poets to match details of their poetry.[5] Certainly, there are many anecdotes about poets and poetry in both Greece and China that can and should be read as constructed with the biographical fallacy; but to read all scenes of authorship in this way (usually, as it happens, dismissively) is less productive than to read at least some of them for the implicit evidence they may provide on the poetics of their time. I identify as the *reverse biographical fallacy* the modern tendency to read all ancient biographical anecdotes as if they had been constructed according to the biographical fallacy, and hope with this book to offer an antidote, or at least an alterative reading strategy, that can recover greater value from these episodes.

[3] I borrow the term from Earl Miner, who uses "implicit poetics" to refer to programs of poetics inferable in cultures that did not, however, develop explicit poetic treatises (Miner (1990) 24n9).

[4] See Beecroft (2010).

[5] The term "biographical fallacy" is of course a subset of Wimsatt's "intentional fallacy;" see Wimsatt (1954) 21. See Lefkowitz (1981) for biographical accounts of Greek poets as products of the biographical fallacy.

Although in both Greece and China the scenes of authorship that I discuss tend most often to focus around authorship in performance and *as* performance, there is a subtle but important difference in emphasis. In the earlier stages of thinking and writing about authorship in China, where the use of the *Songs* as a medium of interstate communication results in their repeated deployment in politically charged circumstances, the claim is that it is performance rather than composition that reveals the essential meaning of a poem, whereas in Greece, where the political role of poetry focuses more on *intra*state affairs, composition assumes a greater role. As the *Songs* and the other classics become fixed, textualized, and reified in the Han dynasty and beyond, authorship-as-composition begins to play a bigger role, in a development I examine in more detail in the relevant chapters.

There is much in this summary that demands further explanation, and such explanation will be forthcoming, both later in this Introduction and throughout the book as a whole. More urgent still might be an examination of the question of why this book should exist at all. I see this question as breaking down into two subsidiary questions: why write (or read) a book about Greece and China? and why focus such a book on authorship? The answer to the former question, I will argue, shapes the answer to the latter in important ways. What follows is an attempt to answer each of these questions in sequence. A book comparing early Greece and China has the opportunity, I believe, to enrich current debates about world literature by challenging some of the assumptions and bases of current theories. In particular, I find that this comparison helpful in developing a theory of cross-cultural poetics (specifically the extent to which Greek poetics is mimetic, and Chinese poetics "affective–expressive"). Further, the Greek–Chinese comparison is a good place to reflect on the mapping of cultural power onto political power, and on centripetal and centrifugal tendencies in cosmopolitan literary languages.[6]

[6] On the forces I am characterizing as "centripetal" and "centrifugal," see below. "Cosmopolitanism" is of course a concept coming under increasing academic scrutiny, both as a model for contemporary political and economic relations and as an idea demanding a thoughtful critique. Basic bibliography here would be Cheah and Robbins, eds. (1998), Breckenridge, Pollock, Bhabha, and Chakrabarty, eds. (2000), Brock and Brighouse, eds. (2005) and Appiah (2006). My own use of the word relies rather more on the work of Sheldon Pollock (see e.g. Pollock (1998) in Cheah and Robbins), although I believe the discussion of cosmopolitanism in the premodern world might contribute usefully to more contemporary discussions.

The figure of the author was a crucial site for the discussion of these issues. Poets' lives, and the implied poetics found therein, make visible a wider range of opinions concerning the value and function of literature in their respective cultures, changing the terms of discussion in the realm of comparative poetics. Archaic Greece and Early China were both regions in which cultural unity overlay a politically fragmented and disordered world; biographical accounts and anecdotes about authors provided a site in which these tensions could be negotiated, freeing literature in both cultures from its origins in specific if poorly known political contexts and facilitating its greater circulation, both within the linguistic community and, ultimately, beyond it.

Scenes of authorship are also important sources for attitudes on the production, circulation, and appreciation of literature. They provide insights into ancient debates on the roles of writing and of performance in the composition of poetry and on the relative value of each. They articulate relationships among works and among genres, often using genealogical connections to make abstract relationships concrete, and to make implicit claims about the nature of the interpretative community within which a poem was understood. In other words, the implied poetics we can recover from these scenes of authorship illuminate many of the debates that currently preoccupy scholarship on both ancient Greece and early China. If these texts do not resolve our own scholarly questions, they do certainly alter the terms of debate, demonstrating a wider range of possible opinions among the ancients themselves.

Why Greece and China?[7]

It might be reasonable to complain that I discuss *only* Greece and China, and not also the Ancient Near East, Japan, and the Sanskrit world, in order fully to address the questions about literary circulation raised earlier. My first reason for focusing on Greece and China is a

[7] In investigating these two ancient cultures in conjunction I am, of course, enormously indebted to predecessor works in this vein, especially Zhang (1992), Saussy (1993), Zhang (1999), Shankman and Durrant 2000, Saussy (2001), Lloyd and Sivin (2002), and Zhang (2005). Their influence inevitably far exceeds what is suggested in the footnotes, as does the influence of Michael Puett and David Schaberg, two scholars of Early China whose work is inherently comparativist in inspiration.

purely pragmatic one, which is that these are two languages and civilizations I happen to know something about. To some extent, then, this is a book whose topic is chosen by the limitations of its author. If there is more to the choice than that, the answer might lie in the particular appropriateness of these two literatures to revealing the shifting of relationships between literatures and their political/social environments over the *longue durée*. I believe, as I have argued elsewhere, that recent debates about "world literature"[8] have oversimplified the nature of these relationships because of a focus on the present and on literatures circulating in or through the Euro-American world. Literatures, I argued there, are always in interaction with their environments, but the nature of those interactions varies. In a general sort of way, the trend over time has of course been for literatures to have ever wider arenas of circulation open to them, but shifting political configurations and the relationships individual languages have borne to political circumstances make for a complex range of patterns. I suggest a series of six phases through which the circulation of literary texts and prestige operate, linking each to a relationship between political and cultural power. These six phases I label the epichoric, the panchoric, the cosmopolitan, the vernacular, the national, and the global. The last two of these (in which, respectively, literary cultures map (or are represented as mapping) onto national borders, and in which literary cultures claim audiences around the world through the venue of global capitalism), are products of the modern world and need not concern us here. In what follows, I retrace briefly what I mean by the first four phases.

My model derives much of its primary inspiration from the work of the Sanskritist Sheldon Pollock. Pollock has written compellingly about the pervasiveness of inscriptional poetry in Sanskrit, from modern Pakistan to Java, in the years 300–1300 AD.[9] In the regions Pollock discusses, Sanskrit inscriptions exist alongside inscriptions in vernacular languages – Prakrits, Kannada, Tamil, Khmer, Old Javanese – throughout much of this period, but with the important distinction

[8] Beecroft (2008b). There, drawing on Wallerstein's account of world-systems theory, I distinguish between a world-literature, which would be a global literary system (which might or might not account for all the literatures of the world), and a world literature, which is the sum total of the world's literary production.

[9] Pollock (1996).

that the vernacular languages are used, as Pollock puts it, to "document" the world, whereas Sanskrit is used to "interpret" the world.[10] Practical matters such as the title to lands or the granting of privileges are in the vernacular; the idealized and aestheticized self-representation of the ruling classes is in Sanskrit. Strikingly, the spread of Sanskrit across South and Southeast Asia takes place without military conquest or large-scale colonization; it seems to be a free and voluntary act on the part of dozens of regimes across the region.[11] Not only does Pollock provide one of the most compelling examples of an incongruity between cultural and political power in the premodern world, but even more importantly he explicitly identifies this incongruity as one worth studying – a concern that should, I argue, be reflected more broadly in premodern studies. I derive my use of the term *cosmopolitan* from Pollock, although I define the term to include situations in which a literary culture circulates either through an empire that claims universal rule (like the Han Empire in China, or, to some extent, the Roman Empire), or in which at least *ideas* about rulership are held to be universal (as Pollock suggests to be the case for the Sanskrit cosmopolis). In the context of Greek culture, I find incipient tendencies toward this sort of cosmopolitan thinking even in Herodotus, and especially in Plato's bid to frame questions of justice and good government in a universal, rather than particularist way; the circulation of Greek literature in the Hellenistic and Imperial eras is an outstanding paradigm of a cosmopolitan literary system. In the Chinese world, I find incipient tendencies toward cosmopolitan thinking in the philosophical world of the fourth century, and thus in certain layers of the *Zuozhuan*; the major focus of cosmopolitan thinking lies, however, in orthodox scholarship on the classics emerging in the Han as both an ideology of imperial rule and a standard of elite education.

In a later article Pollock develops an argument about the nearly simultaneous development of *vernacular* languages (that is, of local literary languages existing in conjunction with a preexisting cosmopolitan literature) in South India and in Western Europe, beginning with

[10] Pollock (1996) 219.

[11] Interestingly, Pollock also points out (p. 232) that the creation of his "Sanskrit cosmopolis" had little to do with homogeneity of script, because Sanskrit itself could be and was written in a variety of regional scripts.

Old English and Kannada in the eighth century AD, and spreading across the Latin and Sanskrit ecumenes in the following seven or eight centuries.[12] As with the article discussed earlier, Pollock's goal again is not to offer an all-encompassing theoretical account of the two phenomena, but to suggest that both phenomena, and vernacularization in particular, have histories that remain to be written. Something important, in other words, can be said about Latin and Sanskrit, or about Old English and Old Kannada, as typological pairs, without worrying about whether there is the least cultural contact between the two. Such a project is hardly new; indeed, Milman Parry's use on South Slavic oral poetry as a paradigm for Homeric epic anticipates this sort of work in some ways by seven decades. I believe, however, that the field of world literature has much to gain through an emphasis on such methodologies. This project is in part an attempt to answer Pollock's question of how cosmopolitan languages and literatures emerge. To do so, I push the questions Pollock is asking back another millennium, to the period in which certain languages – including Greek, Chinese, Persian, Latin, and Sanskrit – are beginning to emerge as incipient cosmopolitan languages.[13]

Clearly, these contexts call for something other than the colonial/postcolonial model of political and cultural hegemony familiar from our times. Even the terms "cosmopolitan" and "vernacular" will need

[12] Pollock (2000). As Pollock himself points out (Pollock (1998) 52), Tamil occupies a somewhat problematic position within this schema; if the (disputed) traditional dating of early Sangam literature to the first few centuries AD is accepted, then Tamil becomes a somewhat disruptive vernacular intrusion on the cosmopolitan millennium. The point need not be to embrace Pollock's model dogmatically; the value in this exercise lies in recognizing that something typologically similar is going on in different environments, and that an investigation across cultures will generate valuable new insights into each.

[13] Zhang Longxi (2006) develops the concept of the "reference culture" for cultures that serve as classical models for other cultures. The notion has an analogue in political anthropology in the concept of "primary state formation," which is believed to have taken place in (at most) six locations: southern Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Indus Valley, northern China, Mesoamerica, and the Andes. State formation elsewhere is conventionally understood as secondary, depending by analogy on the primary formations. See Smith (2003) 82 for a critique of the idealization of the "pristine" isolation of these primary state-formations. Certainly, in the cultural sphere we must be equally careful to avoid assuming that reference cultures exist in isolation. Nonetheless, certain languages and cultures do certainly circulate more widely than others in the premodern world, and the reasons this is so seem worthy of study.

rethinking in the context of the first millennium BC. As used by Pollock and others, "vernacular" implies both a use in written verbal art and a deliberate reaction against an already established cosmopolitan language; Old English and Old Kannada develop as vernaculars in conscious opposition to Latin and to Sanskrit. What, then, do we call local languages, highly developed for the purposes of verbal art, but seemingly operating in a vacuum, without an emulative relationship with a better established and universalizing literary tradition?[14]

I suggest the term *epichoric* for such situations, drawing on the work of Gregory Nagy on archaic Greek lyric.[15] Nagy introduces the term epichoric, in opposition to the Panhellenic, for myth and ritual produced in a local context and whose meaning depends on that local context, cultural material that, whether for reasons of dialect or content, or merely through lack of circulation, does not travel well. The epichoric is thus the zero-grade of literary circulation: a production of verbal art for a local community, and for that community alone. There is a natural tendency to associate the epichoric with the oral and with performance, though we should take care not to make this elision with too much ease. The epichoric may also have a political dimension, in reaction to a broader cultural and political sphere.[16] In this book, I will use the term *epichoric* with reference to both Greek and Chinese traditions, in the sense I have outlined earlier, and I will suggest its potential applicability to other contexts.

The tension for what I am calling epichoric literatures is clearly not at first with a cosmopolitan idiom as such; rather, the tension can be located within languages themselves, between, say, the epichoric tendencies of archaic Greek lyric and the more generalized language and thematics of Homeric epic, or the epichoric claims of the poetry of the *Airs of the States* section of the *Canon of Songs* and the more universal claims (within a cultural world) of the *Court Songs* and *Hymns*. In this cultural phase, political units remain small and localized, but there

[14] This is not to say that early Greek and Chinese literatures *did* in fact evolve in vacuums; see, for example, M. L. West (1997) on cultural relations between Greece and the Ancient Near East. See also Mallory and Mair (2000) and Mair (ed.) (2006) on connections between early China and the Indo-European world.

[15] Nagy (1990b) 66–7.

[16] Nagy (1990b) 67. Nagy points out that lyric, as we know it, tends to merge epichoric and Panhellenic tendencies, a strategy that, in part, enhances local prestige.

is an emergent awareness of a shared culture among a community of such political units, a culture that defines itself partly in literary terms, and that is able to rule some states in, and others out. Nagy's term "Panhellenic" is useful here, and I will generalize it as well. In the Chinese context I will use the term "Panhuaxia"[17] to refer to the dimension of early Chinese literature that aims at speaking to the entire Chinese political and cultural world of the Spring and Autumn and Warring States eras (roughly, the eighth through the third centuries BC, the era of the slow decline into irrelevance of the Zhou dynasty) and, moreover, will designate the generalized version of this phenomenon as *panchoric*.

I characterize the relation between the epichoric and the panchoric as a synchronic and dynamic tension, rather than in terms of a diachronic shift. Indeed, one of my reasons for using these terms is to change the organizing metaphor from the temporal to the geographic, precisely to downplay the notion of an evolutionary change from one mode to another and to see the two modes as complementary. It is quite clear from both the Chinese and the Greek cases that both modes can exist simultaneously and that in fact both may be mutually constitutive. Given the nature of our evidence, we cannot and do not possess much that would qualify as unmediatedly epichoric literature.

[17] I use this term, by analogy with Panhellenic, to refer to an increased sense of cultural self-awareness, with the term Huaxia 華夏 as an emergent autonym, beginning in the eighth and seventh centuries (Chang (2007) 39). Lineage-based ancestor cults give way to the worship of Heaven and of geographic features (Lewis (2006) 147). A common body of poetry begins to circulate, much of which will later enter our *Canon of Songs*, which may have contributed to a *lingua franca* amongst the different dialects of the time (Nylan (2001) 84). Ritual and music likewise become generalized. Li Feng takes the *Hua* in Huaxia to refer to Mount Hua, roughly equidistant between modern Xi'an and Luoyang (the two "capital regions" of the Zhou), whereas *xia* refers to the Xia dynasty (Li (2006) 87). The term thus incorporates a claim to a specific history and a shared geography, fixing the culture in space and time. Simultaneously the history of the Western Zhou is rewritten to downplay the role of the Rongdi "barbarians," to develop mythological figures such as the Yellow Emperor as common ancestors for all the Huaxia lineages, and retrospectively to represent the Western Zhou as a unitary state (Wang (1999) 244–6). In other words, it seems to have been during this period that the master narrative of Chinese history was first written. The term "Chinese," which Western languages take from the name of the Qin dynasty of the third century BC, is anachronistic in pre-Qin China, although in the interests of simplicity I frequently use the terms "Greek" and "Chinese" alike to refer to the cultures conventionally known by those names, even when those labels are anachronistic.

Although I have represented the panchoric and the epichoric earlier as different systems of literary circulation, we are mostly not able to observe epichoric circulation directly. Rather, the panchoric and the epichoric manifest themselves to us most clearly as alternative modes of reading the same texts. They coexist for long periods of time (certainly, in Greece, as long as pride in the *polis* lasts), and, so long as they both last, are available as modes of interpretation for most texts. Certainly Homeric epic and the *Canon of Songs* both contain within themselves the seeds of both sorts of reading.

In both Greek and Chinese it is especially in the practices of reading embodied by scenes of authorship that we see the tensions between the panchoric and the epichoric, and thus between different modes of mapping the circulation of literature onto the circulation of political power, at work. This mapping can be understood in terms of *centripetal* and *centrifugal* forces, with panchoric readings exerting a centripetal desire to assimilate diverse traditions to a homogenous literary practice, and epichoric readings facilitating the centrifugal desire of individual regions to use their verbal art to assert distinct (cultural or political) identities. Panchoric readings assume a degree of cultural unity across the linguistic reach of their texts, and tend to represent literature as a commodity circulating outward from a center, whereas epichoric readings emphasize the knowledge of local circumstances in decoding their texts, and imply something more like a barter-economy of literature, in which the movement of a work of verbal art from one place to another is understood in terms of a personal exchange. Contemporary ideas about the circulation of literature, such as those described by Moretti and Casanova,[18] are the remote descendents of panchoric models, but in the period I am discussing our mappings and models will need to be more complex and diverse.

The Greek and Chinese contexts are intriguing both for their similarities and for their differences. Both Greek and Chinese, from the earliest stages of literary production known to us, simultaneously *are* polycentric literary cultures and *represent themselves* as such. Homer and the archaic lyric poets are all understood as having origins in distinct local (if sometimes unlocalizable) regions of the Greek world, and the

[18] See, for example, Casanova (1999) and Moretti (2000).

lyric poets thematize their regional origins in both dialect and content. In China, the *Airs of the States* represents itself as a geographically structured survey of the poetic tradition. Although actual markers of regional difference are harder to identify, they are not wholly absent from the explicit thematic level, and preponderate on the level of interpretation.

Excursus on Periodization and Literary Circulation in Greece and China

Greek and Chinese are also alike in that the imagined unity-cum-polycentricity of literary culture of both is mapped onto a very real political disunity. There are, however, important differences, and to understand these differences, we will need to turn briefly to the conventional periodization of both cultures. In both cases there exist quite generally accepted periodizations, to which I will make constant reference. Greek history is conventionally divided into the Archaic (c. 800–500 BC), Classical (c. 500–330 BC), Hellenistic (c. 330–c. 30 BC), and Imperial (c. 30 BC–AD 330) eras. Chinese history, more focused on dynastic succession, can be divided for our purposes into the Western Zhou era (c. 1046–770 BC); the Eastern Zhou (770–256 BC, conventionally subdivided into the "Spring and Autumn Era" (770–450 BC) and the "Warring States Era" (450–221 BC); the Qin (221 BC–206 BC); the Western Han (206 BC–AD 9); and the Eastern Han (AD 25–220).[19] These periods map to some extent onto my modes of literary circulation. In the Hellenic world, the Archaic era is the era *par excellence* of the epichoric, but marks also, with Homeric epic, the emergence of Panhellenic culture. Both the epichoric and the Panhellenic continue to exist as complements in the Classical period, during which incipient cosmopolitan tendencies are also emergent; the Hellenistic and Imperial eras are, of course, predominantly cosmopolitan, though

[19] These dates are from Falkenhausen (2006) 6; other sources differ slightly. The Western and Eastern versions of the Zhou and Han dynasties are so called because they were punctuated by dynastic crises that led to the relocation of the capital. The Spring and Autumn and Warring States eras are named after the texts that are our major sources for each. For good brief discussions of early Chinese history see the introductory materials to Falkenhausen (2006), Li (2006), and Chang (2007), all of which make frequent appearances in the notes.

interest in the epichoric and the Panhellenic continues. In the Huaxia world, the Western Zhou seems likewise to have been epichoric, with emergent Panhuaxia tendencies; the Spring and Autumn and Warring States eras represent the consolidation of the Panhuaxia and, in the latter, the beginnings of cosmopolitan thinking, which is, in turn, dominant by the Han.[20]

Both the Hellenic and the Huaxia worlds attached great significance to their *charter myths*, both of which notionally took place in a broadly similar era. The Greeks traced their history to and through the Trojan War, traditionally dated to the twelfth/eleventh century BC; similarly, the Chinese world saw the defeat of the Shang dynasty and formation of the Zhou by Kings Wen and Wu in the mid-eleventh century as the critical foundational moment. Some of the differences in the relations between cultural unity and political disunity and Greece and China mirror the differences in these charter myths. Chinese political disunity in the centuries from 1100–200 BC is always subsumed under the claim of political unity under the rule of the Zhou dynasty, actually impotent from the eighth century, but still maintaining a ceremonial position of overlordship until the conquests of the Qin dynasty in the mid-third century BC.[21] Panhuaxia culture, then, was always caught in a bind between the desires of regional states to assert their own power within the interstate system, and the need to do so using a shared cultural language that referenced an idealized past in which all states were under central control. A major theme of this book will be, in fact, how the cosmopolitan, commentary-oriented culture of the Ruists[22] sought, in the Han, to normalize the tensions between these centrifugal and centripetal tendencies, usually in favor of the centripetal. In part, they did so because their ideologies of reading became, for complex reasons, the ideologies of imperial rule.

[20] This account, necessarily schematic, will be reinforced in the following chapter.

[21] On these points generally, see Keightley (1999).

[22] A more accurate term than "Confucianism." See Zufferey (2003) 359–68 on the *ru*, originally ritual specialists. When the "Confucian" classics were institutionalized as such in the Han, the term *ru* was used for specialists in those classics. The term Ruist thus refers to specialists in classical exegesis, and those who adhered to the ideologies associated with the classics, a group who traced their origins to Confucius despite having a somewhat different project. See also Lloyd and Sivin (2002) 22–3 and 46–8, especially on the very considerable extent to which Han-era state "Confucianism" ignored the teachings of Confucius himself, as presented in the *Analects*, a point I return to in several ways.

In Greece, in contrast, the absence of even the historical claim to political unity led to a rather different process. The major sites for Panhellenic cultural activity were Homeric epic, the oracle at Delphi, and the Olympic games,[23] also institutions representing a link with the past; but where the early Zhou was a reference point in both cultic and political terms, the heroic past of Homer, Delphi, and the Olympics was primarily important in cultic terms. Appeals to the Trojan War charter-myth were not dreams of an imperial past. Ownership of that mythic and cultic past was indeed a source of debate in the Greek world, but lacked the goal of political unity as a motivating force.[24] Centrifugal tendencies in Greek literature tended to express themselves more eloquently in generic terms, with lyric in particular serving in many cases as an epichoric corrective to the Panhellenic ambitions of Homeric epic. The different generic system, combined with the absence of stimulus toward the closing of a literary canon (which Ruist readers found in the claim that Confucius selected and edited that canon), meant that for a much longer period, and in more clearly documented ways, the Panhellenic–epichoric tension expressed itself in literary production. This tension helped shape the interpretive tradition, beginning at least with Herodotus and Plato, as I argue. Unlike the Ruists, however, Plato and his literary-critical heirs succeed neither in encoding their interpretations of past texts in concrete form, nor in making those textualized interpretations normative as an ideology of political rule. As such, cosmopolitan scenes of authorship serve very distinct roles in Greek and Chinese contexts.

Despite these differences, there are significant structural and typological parallels between the Greek and Chinese cases. In both contexts, there was a greater sense of cultural unity than of political unity, and in both cases, literature and thinking about it provided a means of crossing the gap between the two.[25] The fact that on the whole this

[23] Nagy (1999) 7, where he adds the adoption of the alphabet and the process of colonization.

[24] See, for example, Herodotus 1.65–70 on the story of the Spartan seizure of the bones of Orestes.

[25] It will be one of the central contentions of this book that this kind of thinking is more often revealed as implicit in, for example, scenes of authorship than spelled out programmatically. As we shall see, for example, the *Lives of Homer* do not develop a theory of why Homeric epic was popular across the Greek world – but they do use biographical narratives to account for how epic circulated from city to city, and how it adapted to local and more general needs.

mediation proved convincing is, as I have suggested, one of the reasons both Greek and Chinese literatures were able to emerge over time as cosmopolitan idioms, able to circulate in a wide range of temporal and cultural contexts as both aesthetic and ideological models. In other words, the strategies used by texts and their interpreters to make epichoric claims palatable in a panchoric world served, in turn, to help those same texts circulate in the still-wider cosmopolitan circuit. The similarities between the two cases are striking enough, I believe, to encourage speculation on whether the success of other cosmopolitan languages (e.g., Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian) was due to similar phenomena. The answer to that question is beyond my powers, let alone the scope of this book, but I hope to provide at least a starting point for a more thorough investigation.

Some supportive evidence may come from recent work in archaeological theory. Scholars such as Adam T. Smith and Norman Yoffee have observed and described complex interactions between politically distinct units sharing a common culture (and common ideology of the state) in regions as diverse as the Mayan lowlands of the classical period, southern Mesopotamia both before and after the conquests of Sargon, and Shang Dynasty China.[26] Although the Mayan case is rather different, both the Mesopotamian case, where texts like *Gilgamesh* come to circulate beyond both political and linguistic frontiers,[27] and the "Sanskrit cosmopolis" described by Pollock suggest that literature will be all the more able to circulate beyond those immediate cultural borders if it has been composed, not for a single polity, but for circulation in regions linked by a common language and common ideologies of the state, but otherwise politically fragmented. The case of Latin literature provides, I would argue, further evidence. When Latin is the language of a universalist empire, its literature does not circulate as widely through that empire as we would expect from a modern perspective; the Greek-speaking portion of the empire showed little or no interest in Latin literature. By contrast, after the fall of the Roman empire, Latin literature does circulate widely across political

[26] For the Mayan case, see Smith (2003) 139–45. For Mesopotamia, see Yoffee (2005) 53–9, especially on the king-list as a concretized version of a cultural ideal. Smith (2003) 113 reads the Mesopotamian king-list rather differently, as a projection of the spatial order of geopolitical relations onto a temporal order of dynastic succession. For Shang China see Keightley (1983) Map 17.3 and Chen and Liu 21.

[27] On this point, see also Yoffee (2005) 56.

and linguistic borders, precisely, I suggest, because that literature is now in a position to function as part of a cosmopolitan ideology of statehood stretching across a community of states.[28]

Here, then, is the principal justification for this book about Greece and China; these two cultural worlds offer an excellent opportunity to test the usefulness of my model. The classical languages of both cultures are, in the first half of the first millennium BC, well on their way to becoming cosmopolitan languages in Pollock's sense, partly through the circulation of core literary texts including Homer and lyric poetry in the Greek case, and the *Canon of Songs* and historical texts in the Chinese case. Before they can achieve that status, however, each language community needs to manage the tension between the centripetal pull of panchoric impulses and the centrifugal pull of the epichoric. Greece and China each make especially interesting case studies from this perspective because they are both cultures that mimic the cosmopolitan phenomenon within themselves, as each combines an actual political disunity with strong intralinguistic cultural and ritual ties. Questions of ethnicity and national identity need to be posed carefully in this era, in order to avoid anachronism, but our sources attest to a variety of shared cultural and religious practices within both the Greek and the Chinese world that helped to shape members of each culture's sense that they were somehow like each other and different from others. If we must look (and we must) for something beyond political and economic power to account for the success of Greek and Chinese as cosmopolitan languages, then, I suggest, the skill with which each language's literary tradition negotiated the panchoric/epichoric tension is an important place to start.

This is necessarily a partial study, due to my own limitations as a scholar. Critically, India and the Near East (to name two very obvious examples) are missing from my work, and no attempt to account for the rise of cosmopolitan languages can be complete without examining those two cultural worlds. My goal in writing this book is therefore not

[28] The position of Greek in the Roman Empire is also, obviously, analogous; see esp. Swain (1996). Yoffee (2005) 17 develops a specialized definition of "civilization" to cover just such "ideological confederations" of states. The concept is a useful one; my concept of the "panchoric" is analogous, using a term designed both to avoid the associations of "civilization" and because "epichoric" and "panchoric" suggest opposing polarities, where "state" and "civilization" suggest discrete members of a set. See Smith (2003) 80 for a critique of the use of the term "state" outside a present and Western-centered discourse.

to draft some immutable law governing the emergence of a cosmopolitan literary culture, but rather to sketch in at least partial outline how two particular (and particularly important) literary languages achieved that goal. I hope not to determine what is necessary, but to begin to enumerate what is possible. This approach has small-scale methodological implications as well. The nature of the work I wish to do requires me to work a great deal with anecdotal and fragmentary material, material that can gesture at possibilities better than it can rule them out or make them necessary.

Why Authorship?

The question "Why authorship?" could be rephrased, perhaps, as "Why does a book on the emergence of cosmopolitan literary circulations focus on authorship?" I will argue for the importance of the question of authorship, for its intrinsic interest, but also for the light it can shed on a number of subsidiary issues. I will offer a definition of authorship, which will be both broader than some might like and different in its conception. My definition is not altogether intuitive, and an understanding of what I mean is indispensable to the arguments that follow.

As I show in detail in Chapter 1, neither the Greek nor the Chinese world initially makes a sharp distinction between composition and performance; in particular, phrases exist in both languages in which one meaning or the other is unambiguously meant, but there are other cases where we are less certain which is meant. Changing attitudes toward writing, and continuing linguistic evolution, do lead to a distinction between composition and performance in both languages, but in earlier texts we cannot always distinguish the two. This observation prompts me to define authorship, for the purposes of this book, as follows:

Authorship is a property ascribed to a literary text.[29] It reflects an attempt to ground and contextualize that text by assigning its composition and/or performance to a specific individual, real or hypothetical, and the narrative representation of that composition and/or performance constitutes a major category of evidence concerning authorship.

[29] I borrow this formulation (slightly altered) from Owen (2006) 7. Owen is speaking about authorship in Chinese poetry of the early centuries AD, but his thoughts on that subject apply *a fortiori* to earlier periods.

Two features of this definition may be controversial. One, that I consider performance, under some circumstances, to be a kind of authorship, I address in more detail as the argument of the book progresses. The other, that authorship is a property ascribed to a text rather than a fact about its origins, may require further explanation. In ancient Greece, texts come with varying kinds of claims of authorship. Some, such as the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, are unambiguously attributed to a named author, although they contain no unambiguous internal markers of authorship and although nothing can be said with certainty concerning the man to whom they are attributed. Some, such as the remainder of the so-called Epic Cycle in Greece, are attributed to one or more completely unknown individuals, with competing attributions for the same text. Some, such as the poetry of Archilochus or Sappho, are composed in something like a consistent authorial persona, even though we know next to nothing about the man (or woman) behind the name. Some, such as the poetry of Pindar, come to us in a recognizable style and with an occasional content so specific that the poems themselves must date to a specific historical context. Finally, there are named authors without texts attached to their names.

Similar varieties of authorship are found in the Chinese tradition, with a few extra possibilities. Most poems in the *Canon of Songs* are not attributed to any individual in terms of their composition, but are more strongly linked to specific historical figures in terms of specific performance contexts. In these cases, we are often left unsure as to whether we are to think that the poem was composed *ad hoc*, or that a preexisting work was performed in a new context with a new meaning. In the case of a handful of poems, which I discuss at the beginning of Chapter 5, an authorial figure is named in the poem itself, but nothing is known about these figures, and, interestingly, nothing is even speculated. In almost all these various possibilities, the actual identity of the author, if one is claimed, is contestable, and in most cases it is unclear whether or not it would matter if we knew the name of the person responsible for the composition of a given poem (given that we have little more knowledge of them than their names).

All that notwithstanding, our Greek and Chinese sources are full of biographical anecdotes concerning the composition and performance of poetry by named individuals. These anecdotes, which I am grouping

under the name "scenes of authorship,"[30] can be understood in one of two ways. They might be read for the explicit value they claim, that is, as evidence concerning actual historical figures. This approach has rightly been discredited in both cases;[31] the information we have is simply too late, too scattered and contradictory, too convenient for the ideological agendas of those transmitting it to us. Biographical material on poets' lives has, accordingly, been a rather underexplored

[30] I use this phrase by preference to Foucault's "fonction-auteur" to emphasize the performed and performative dimension of authorship as I understand it. I form the phrase by analogy from the following passage in Derrida's "Freud et la scène de l'écriture" from *L'écriture et la difference*:

> The "subject" of writing does not exist if we mean by that some sovereign solitude of the writer. The subject of writing is a *system* of relations between strata: the Mystic Pad, the psyche, society, the world. Within that scene, on that stage, the punctual simplicity of the classical subject is not to be found. (Allan Bass, transl., 226–7)
>
> Le «sujet» de l'écriture n'existe pas si l'on entend par là quelque solitude souveraine de l'écrivain. Le sujet de l'écriture est un *système* de rapports entre les couches: du bloc magique, du psychique, de la société, du monde. A l'intérieur de cette scène, la simplicité ponctuelle du sujet classique est introuvable. (*L'écriture et la différence* 335)

My interest here is confined to the ways in which this passage seems to hint at something like the argument Foucault will make six years later in "Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur?" although here the author functions perhaps as the Subject *par excellence*. The phrase "scène de l'écriture" does not appear explicitly in this passage, and is nowhere defined by Derrida. Certainly, the full meaning of *scène* (incorporating both "scene" and "stage") is relevant, as is the Freudian *scène originaire*. Derrida's seems to be moving from a narrative mode of subjectivity (where a speaking subject within the psyche, operating from a *solitude souveraine de l'écrivain*, controls the act of writing) to what we might call a dramatic mode of subjectivity (in which there is no speaking subject separable from the other elements of the psyche and in which it is the relationships among those elements which constitute the self; the solitude of the writer being replaced with the public space of the stage). This is somewhat similar to the understanding of authorship that I develop here; I reject the ancient author (at least as he appears in the scenes from which we know him) as a narrativized and narrativizable subject and see him instead as a dramatization of the social forces concentrated on poetry. Scenes of authorship are not biographical narratives; they are rather places in which conflicting ideas about literature are dramatized.

[31] On Greek authorship, see Lefkowitz (1981), who argues that the biographical traditions concerning the Greek poets were based on material from the poems attributed to that poet, thus being a form of reverse biographical fallacy. I shall have more to say on Lefkowitz's views later. On the Chinese material I discuss, see for example Henderson (1991), van Zoeren (1991), and Shaughnessy (1997). None of the Sinologists I have just listed make authorship or performance explicit themes of their work, but all of them explore the question to some extent.

field. If, however, we ignore the possible historicity of biographical anecdotes, and concentrate instead precisely on what those anecdotes say about the ideologies of their sources, scenes of authorship become rich sources of information on all sorts of questions concerning the production, distribution, and value of literature. The scene of authorship serves as a link between text and context, not merely claiming to tell us who "wrote" a poem, but also frequently making a variety of claims about how and why the poem was composed, and how and where and why it should circulate.

As such, scenes of authorship often represent, in vivid narrative form, concrete and human embodiments of competing theories about what literature is and how it comes to be. In other words, they offer, as I have already suggested, implied poetics, theories (often multiple and contradictory) about literature that may not be explicitly articulated but whose existence beneath the surface of the text can be inferred. This implied poetics need not represent a willful encoding of avidly held beliefs into biographical form; just as often, implied poetics (as I use the term) can refer to the underlying or unthought assumptions about literature that inform a biographer's conjectures. As such, this book has little to say about the *actual* conditions under which ancient literature was produced (and by whom); rather, I am interested in what we can learn from the stories told about authors about how literature was interpreted.

Twentieth-century theory on the author certainly offers its own versions of implied poetics. Wimsatt and Beardsley develop their own implicit model of the author in order to make the claim that that author's intentionality can be bracketed out of problems of interpretation.[32] Barthes' author is something of a sacral figure, whose death is necessary to give life to the readerly community.[33] Foucault reads the author in functionalist terms, as a device for classifying and filiating texts.[34] Parry, although draining the author-function of most of its individuating characteristics, nonetheless allows it to retain minor discretionary powers, using one epithet more often than another, but

[32] Wimsatt (1954) 431.
[33] Barthes (1984) 67.
[34] Foucault (1994) 789–821.

working within an essentially closed repertoire.[35] In each case, talking about the author turns out to be a convenient way to talk about how texts are read or written.

If this is true for our times, it is, I argue, still more true for the opposite end of the historical record. The greatest intrinsic interest that ancient accounts of authorship should hold for us lies not in what they have to say about authors, but in the theories of literature that they imply and embody. To write the life of an author, especially in default of reliable documentary evidence (the case for most of the materials I study here), is inevitably to reveal, intentionally or no, one's assumptions about how and why literature is produced. I will expound the specific sorts of ideas about textual production that we find in more detail below, but in general authorial biographical materials can tell us much about questions such as whether authorship is an individual or a collective process, whether it is centered in performance or composition, whether writing is a compulsory or a possible element of authorship, and whether or not meaning is produced within the act of authorship, or within the experience of interpretation.

Chapter by Chapter

The book opens with a chapter discussing explicit theories of poetics found in early Greece and China, especially in Plato and the Mao tradition. I examine several imagined points of divergence between the so-called "mimetic" poetics of Greece, and the "affective–expressive" poetics of China, and demonstrate a richer and more complex set of relationships among the versions of poetics expressed in these texts.

The second chapter concerns the dozen or so ancient biographical accounts, of varying ages, of Homer. I show how these *Lives of Homer* provide insights into how the Greeks understood Homeric epic as both epichoric and Panhellenic, and into the history of circulation and transmission of epic.

The third chapter begins with biographical anecdotes about the lyric poet Terpander, a sort of limit-case for the model of implied poetics I developed in the previous chapter. These anecdotes do not gloss particular works of literature (because none exist to be glossed),

[35] Parry (1980) 266 n2.

but instead debate the conditions of production and distribution for early lyric poetry. The methodological lessons learned in this investigation are then applied to anecdotes about the better-known lyricists Alcman and Sappho.

Chapter 4 begins with the anecdote of Stesichorus' blinding by Helen, relayed by Plato in the *Phaedrus*. I use a reading of the context of this anecdote to explore the relationships between epichoric lyric and Panhellenic epic that this story mediates.

Chapter 5 examines two poems from the *Airs of Chen* section of the *Airs of the States* in the Chinese *Canon of Songs*, which are glossed within the commentaries by a garish tale of adultery, transvestitism, and murder, set in 599/598 BC. I use these poems and their readings to develop a model for understanding the differing nature of indexicality under performed and text-based regimes of verbal art.

In chapter 6, I examine a quintessentially Ruist kind of scene of authorship, where diplomatic negotiations take place exclusively through the medium of performances of the *Songs*. I examine one representative diplomatic negotiation, said to have taken place between the states of Zheng and Lu in 613 BC, and the implicit claims this scene makes concerning that community of interpretation.

The seventh and final chapter, like Chapter 4, examines a moment of crisis for panchoric narrative. It concerns the *Great King Wu* dance, a ritual said to commemorate the conquest of the Shang dynasty by the Zhou. The book concludes with a return to the question of the means by which early Greek and Chinese were differently rendered suitable for circulation in cosmopolitan contexts far beyond their original audiences.

Notes on Texts and Translations

For the most part, the Greek texts I discuss, including Homeric epic, the lyric and tragic poets, and the historians and the philosophers, are likely familiar enough to an English-language audience not to require an introduction. Many of the biographical materials I discuss are much less well known. I attempt to identify each author as he first arises in the text of a given chapter; further information is frequently available through standard references such as the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*. I apologize in advance to Classicist readers who may, perhaps, find it

frustrating to be reminded that Pausanias was a geographer of the second century AD; their indulgence in the first half of the book will be repaid, I hope, by similar assistance with Chinese figures and texts later on.

The major Chinese texts I address may require further introduction. For the most part, I am discussing a collection of works often referred to in English as the "Confucian classics," a rubric that broadened over time, but initially referred to five texts in particular: the *Documents*, the *Songs*, the *Changes*, the *Rites*, and the *Spring and Autumn Annals*. The *Documents* are a collection of speeches, edicts, and treatises, purportedly ranging from the mythical sage-emperors Yao and Shun down to the early Western Zhou. The *Songs* are a collection of about 300 poems in four categories, likely dating from the Western Zhou and the early Spring and Autumn era. The *Changes* is a divination manual, with several later layers of analysis. The *Rites* is a collection of three texts, discussing the theory and practice of ritual and the structure of the ideal bureaucratic state. The *Spring and Autumn Annals* is a terse account of events in the Zhou world, from the perspective of the regional state of Lu, covering the years 722–481 BC. Several other texts were later identified as "Classics." The *Zuozhuan*, or the *Chronicle of Mr. Zuo*, is a narrative history of the period of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* that enters the canon as a commentary on the *Annals*; additionally, the texts associated with the philosophers Confucius and Mencius were eventually canonized as well.

I have already suggested that "Ruist" might be a more accurate label for these texts than "Confucian," given that they only began to take their present shape and to acquire their (eventually) orthodox interpretations in the hands of the ritual specialists of the early Han, a process that was still ongoing in the Eastern Han centuries later. The label "classics" is problematic in its own way. The term *jing*, which is most often translated as "classic," but which I translate as "canon" for etymological reasons (both *jing*, which refers to the warp thread, and *canôn*, which refers in Greek to the rod that guides the shuttle, are weaving terms for the system that guides the production of cloth), is not used of the items in this collection in our earliest sources.[36] In older texts, we see instead references to the *Songs*, the *Documents*, the

[36] The earliest references to the "Five Classics" seems to have been in the Xunzi and the *Zhuangzi* in the third century BC; see Henderson (1991) 42.

Rites, the *Music*. Furthermore, in the absence of the singular/plural distinction for nouns in Chinese, combined with the absence of a typographical convention to indicate that a given word or phrase is to be read as the title of a text, we are often unable to tell whether a particular ancient text is discussing, say, the *Songs*, songs, or a song. It is accordingly difficult to know at exactly what point these collections came to be thought of as closed canons. Certainly, the *Zuozhuan* cites and quotes songs not in our *Songs*; the recent Shanghai Fine Arts Museum bamboo-strip text titled "*Confucius' Discussion of the* Songs," thought to date from about the fourth to third century BC, also discusses a significant number of songs outside our collection.[37]

Each of the classics is what Michael Nylan has called a "sedimented" text, an accretion of divergent textual materials that coalesced over a very long period. In many cases, layers of commentary have been incorporated into the canonical text itself, as with the *Zuozhuan*. In other cases texts show clear signs of being edited and revised many times. An excellent example of the complexities inherent in dating the classics can be found in the *Canon of Yao* chapter of the *Canon of Documents*, which claims to date from the mists of antiquity. It makes reference to Han institutions, and therefore cannot be earlier than the second century BC; we have no trace of the existence of the text before the fourth century AD, and it is commonly believed to have been forged at that time. It nonetheless preserves astronomical and other details confirmed by modern astronomy and recovered Shang oracle bones, and thus is likely to preserve in some fashion some genuinely ancient material, more than a millennium and a half before its probable date of "forgery."[38] The bulk of the material in each classic likely dates to the late Western Zhou and Spring and Autumn period, and/or claims to represent a state of affairs at the start of the Western Zhou.[39] Most of the material in the classics either transcribes performance (the *Songs* and much of the *Documents*, as well as the

[37] Ma (2001).

[38] Nylan (2001) 132–3.

[39] A standard reference on the dating of pre-Han texts is Loewe, ed. *Early Chinese Texts: A Bibliographical Guide* (henceforth *ECTBG*) (1993); for a different point of view, see Brooks (2003/04) on the *Zuozhuan* and Brooks and Brooks (1998) on the *Analects*. I sometimes draw attention to the dates suggested by the Brookses, whose textual layers at time parallel patterns I identify. All datings must however, in my view, remain conjectural; as I note throughout, recent discoveries continually alter our understanding of the chronology of early Chinese texts.

Music), or encodes behavioral practice in textual form (the *Rites* and the *Changes*). Taken as a whole, the classics could be said to represent the sum total of the knowledge and behavior proper to an aristocratic Huaxia male of the Spring and Autumn period, in much the same way that epic and lyric performance (including dance) formed the education of elite men in Archaic Greece.[40]

When citing Greek texts, I have generally used the texts available in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, for ease of use. Where I have consulted particular critical editions or commentaries those are noted in the body of the text; for example, I use Martin West's Loeb edition for the *Lives of Homer* because this is the only text of those materials that includes an English translation for the nonspecialist. When citing from the Confucian classics, my page numbers are taken from the original 1815 printing of Ruan Yuan's (阮元's) edition of the Thirteen Classics, the 十三經注疏, available online through the Academia Sinica in Taiwan.[41] Again, ease of reference for my readers is the prime consideration; I discuss textual issues where they are relevant to my investigation. Songs from the *Canon of Songs* are identified at first appearance in a chapter by their number within the collection, by their title in Chinese, and by an English translation of that title, along with page numbers from Ruan Yuan's edition; subsequent references use the English translation only. Page numbers are only offered for citations from the commentary on the *Songs* when the commentary is discussed separately from the poem itself, because the main commentary entry will always immediately follow the *Song* title. Quotations from the *Zuozhuan* are cited by duke and year as well as by page number. Editions of other Chinese texts are identified as necessary.

Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own. In transliterating from Greek, I have generally used the more familiar Latinate forms for proper names (Aeschylus for Aiskhulos), although preferring more direct transliterations for lexical items left untranslated (*psukhê* rather than *psyche*), in the hopes that the former will be more accessible, and the latter will usefully defamiliarize Greek words whose

[40] Nylan (2001) offers an excellent and highly readable introduction to the Confucian classics.

[41] Available at http://dbo.sinica.edu.tw/~tdbproj/handy1/index.html, accessed September 20, 2009.

English derivatives we too easily assimilate. When transliterating from Chinese, I consistently use the *Hanyu pinyin* transliteration system used in the People's Republic of China, now the almost universal standard in recent American Sinological scholarship, with the exception of the names of twentieth-century ethnically Chinese scholars, where I use the form most commonly found (generally, *Hanyu pinyin* for scholars from the People's Republic of China and the older Wade-Giles system for scholars based in Taiwan, with exceptions). With some hesitation, I use the terms AD and BC, rather than their newer equivalents CE and BCE.

1

Explicit Poetics in Greece and China

Points of Divergence and Convergence

A discussion of the *explicit* poetics of Greece and China, which occupies this chapter, will provide helpful context for the discussion of the *implicit* poetics found in scenes of authorship in each culture. The beginnings of poetic theory are in both cases rather shadowy. Archaic Greek epic and lyric offer scattered reflections on the function and value of poetry, whereas Athenian Old Comedy, and especially the *Frogs* of Aristophanes, offers critiques of the major tragedians of the day, and Plato, in the *Republic*, the *Phaedrus*, and elsewhere, adds his own always distinctive voice to this discussion.[1] In China, the "Canon of Shun" from the *Canon of Documents* 書經, ostensibly dating almost to the origins of history, contains a well-known statement about the function of poetry:

Poetry verbalizes intention; song prolongs words.[2]

詩言志歌永言 (書經舜典 46)

Less concisely but more helpfully, early philosophical texts such as the *Analects* and the *Mencius* contain more detailed discussions of the role

[1] Russell and Winterbottom (1972) 1–84 offers translations of these and other pertinent texts. Some of these passages will be discussed in more detail in subsequent chapters.

[2] This is a difficult text to date; as noted in the introduction, the *Canon of Yao* must include some authentic Shang material, even though much of the text appears to have been composed in the Eastern Han or later (Nylan (2001) 132–3). Note that, as in the Greek tradition, poetry and song are closely linked.

of poetry, including discussions of specific poems; although these texts were assembled over centuries rather than released in completed form by their protagonists, they nonetheless contain considerable useful material for the history of poetics. The recently discovered *Confucius' Discussion of the Songs* 孔子詩論, a text that offers brief readings of many of the *Songs*, along with a few general comments, is thought to date from the end of the Early Warring States period (i.e., to around 375 BC), and thus represents the earliest known text in Chinese poetics.[3]

All of these texts are significant for the history of comparative poetics, and all will play their appropriate parts in the story this book will tell. Each culture, however, also has texts *taken as* representative of their poetics by later stages of their own cultures, and by outside observers. The *Poetics* of Aristotle and the Mao Preface to the *Canon of Songs* are retrospectively constructed as the foundational treatises of Greek and Chinese poetics, and most indigenous accounts of poetics in each region embrace, reject, or otherwise account for these progenitors, to such an extent that the refutation of their basic premises will still seem like a worthwhile project in our own times. No account of comparative Sino-Hellenic poetics would be complete without these texts (although it is my central contention that the project of comparison must not stop there), and after a brief introductory discussion of each text, I move to a discussion of three points of comparison between them. My first two points pertain to areas in which these texts (and related texts) are generally thought to diverge, namely in the relation of poetry to the constitution of the state and the role of representation and transmission in poetry. The final point of comparison has, I believe, received less satisfactory comparative treatment to date, namely the relationship between composition and performance. Although there are differences between the two texts on all three points, my readings will aim to challenge the relevance of these differences to master narratives of cultural difference. In so doing, I will demonstrate that a more careful reading of explicit Greek and Chinese poetics, including that found in the *Poetics* and the Mao Preface, already begins to open up the diverse possibilities I trace in implicit poetics in the following chapters.

[3] For the text, see Ma (2001). For the dating, see Liu (2003) 3.

The Texts

On the Greek side, I draw most heavily on the *Republic* for Plato and on the *Poetics* for Aristotle, with additional material taken from other texts. We should not take these texts as representative of innate attitudes of the Greek world; indeed, given the form of the Platonic dialogue, and the likely status of the *Poetics* as a student transcription of Aristotle's own words, we must exercise caution even in assuming that these texts reflect the views of their own authors. Nonetheless, their incalculable effect on later thinking on poetics, in Europe and beyond, demands our attention to them here.

The Chinese texts I discuss will be less familiar to some readers. In what follows, I quote from the *Analects* 論語, a collection of dialogues and sayings connected to Confucius (551–479 BC). This text assumed its final shape over several centuries, and it is always problematic to determine the dating of any individual passage. Another text, the Mao Preface to the *Canon of Songs* 毛詩序, which probably dates to the first half of the second century BC,[4] is a product of one of the four most prominent "schools"[5] of *Canon of Songs* criticism, and the only school whose work survives in coherent form. This tradition survives in the form of a general introduction to the *Songs*, along with brief comments on individual poems (along with several layers of commentary on those comments, added in later periods).[6] I translate below the most immediately relevant portion of the *Preface*, a passage to which I will return more than once in this chapter and beyond:

> Poetry is the means by which intention is moved forward. Within the heart, it is intention; when expressed in words, it becomes poetry. Emotion moves within and takes form in words. When words are not enough, then we sigh and moan. When sighing and moaning are not enough, we chant and sing. When chanting and singing are not enough, we unconsciously use hands and

[4] Lewis (1999) 173.

[5] The term "school," used, for example, for the Mao, Han, Lu, and Qi lineages of *Songs* interpretation, is clearly misleading and anachronistic, in that there is no evidence for continuous lineages in scholarly communities (other than the Ruists) before AD 200; see, for example, Lloyd and Sivin (2002) 55. I continue to use the term, partly out of convenience and partly because my interest resides as much in the retrospective imagination of scholarly communities as in those (largely unknowable) communities themselves.

[6] See Owen (1992) for more on this text and its function.

dance, feet and tapping. Emotion is expressed in sound. When the sound attains form we call it music. The music of ordered times is peaceful and happy and governance is harmonious. In disordered times the music is angry and resentful and governance is perverse. The music of a failed state is mournful and pensive and its people are in difficulty. Accordingly, when ordering profit and loss, moving heaven and earth, enticing ghosts and spirits, nothing approaches poetry. By this means former kings regulated husband and wife, attained filiality and respect, made human relations benevolent, beautified educational transformation, and altered customs.

詩者，志之所之也，在心為志，發言為詩。情動於中而形於言，言之不足故嗟嘆之，嗟嘆之不足故永歌之，永歌之不足，不知手之舞之，足之蹈之也。情發於聲，聲成文謂之音。治世之音安以樂，其政和；亂世之昔怨以怒，其政乖；亡國之音哀以思，其民困。故正得失，動天地，感鬼神，莫近於詩。先王以是經夫婦，成孝敬，厚人倫，美教化，移風俗。(毛詩正義13)

Poetry and the State

One of the conventional distinctions drawn between Greek and Chinese poetics lies in the relationship between poetry and the political. Chinese "affective–expressive" poetics has an explicitly political agenda and serves the state, it is argued, whereas Greek poetics either evades the political (Aristotle) or views poetry with suspicion as a threat to state power (Plato).[7] Both of these assumptions call for closer and more critical examination. The relationship between poetry and politics is understood as indexical, I would argue, in the Mao Preface. Because poetry is a spontaneous expression of inward emotion, it serves as a symptom of the ambient political situation – happy times produce happy music, and *vice versa*. This conception of poetry implies a centripetal movement in which poetry is generated by individuals, but then interpreted by the state, and indeed there are several instances in which Confucian tradition claims to have put this notion into practice, sending officials into the countryside to gather folk poetry, not, as with the folklorists of the nineteenth century, to discover or invent a pristine national popular culture, but rather as a sort of qualitative opinion survey.

One of the earliest sources for this model of the development of the *Canon of Songs* as a collection is the "Royal Ordinances" 王制 section

7 See, for example, Miner (1990), a work whose ambitions I hope to further, even as I supplement its findings.

of the *Record of Rites*, which likely dates to the last few centuries BC and is thus roughly contemporary with the Mao Preface. It thus, in the terms set forth in my Introduction, represents a cosmopolitan reimagining of earlier patterns of literary circulation. The passage connects the circulation and collection of poetry with the circulation and collection of goods:

> In the second month of the year, [the ruler] would go on a royal inspection tour in the east, reaching as far as Mount Tai. He burned brushwood [in sacrifice] and gazed toward and sacrificed to the mountains and streams. He gave audience to the feudal lords, and, asking after the centenarians, visited them. He commanded the Grand Official to present poems, so that he might see the mood of the people. He commanded that the market present merchants, so that he might see what the people liked and disliked.
>
> 歲二月東巡守・至于岱宗・柴而望祀山川・覲諸侯・問百年者就見之・命大師陳詩・以觀民風・命市納賈・以觀民之所好惡・(禮記王制 226)

As I have suggested, this passage is more useful as a symptom of later interpretations of the Western Zhou than as a record of the practices of that dynasty. The complex history of the Zhou dynasty (eleventh to third century BC) led the later stages of that dynasty, especially the Warring States period (a period in which China was politically fragmented, but in which cultural unity was rapidly developing), retrospectively to reimagine the earlier stages (specifically the Western Zhou) as an idealized time in which a just and highly centralized imperial state ruled the entire Chinese world.[8] This Warring States appropriation of the early Zhou as a utopian Panhuaxia past was in turn reappropriated by the Han dynasty, beginning during the reign of Han Wudi (140–87 BC), but much more during the Wang Mang interregnum between the Western and Eastern Han, as well as in the Eastern Han itself, as the essential source of its own cosmopolitan ideology of rule.[9]

[8] For the general argument, see, for example, Wang Ming-Ke (1999). I develop my own version of this argument in the Chinese half of the book.

[9] Recent scholarship (Wang Baoxuan (2001), Fukui (2005), Nylan (2009)) has cast doubt on the traditional narrative that the state sponsorship of Ruist classical scholarship became entrenched under Han Wudi, suggesting that the Five Classics did not yet constitute a coherent corpus, and that the study of other texts, such as those of the Huang-Lao school, carried more weight at the court of Wudi. In this new view, the entrenchment of the Ruist study of the classics took root under Wang Mang and in the early Eastern Han, partly as a critique of the Qin (as had been assumed to be

From this perspective, the *Record of Rites* passage is highly suggestive. We cannot be certain of its dating or authorship, but in its fascination with the proper role of the universal ruler it serves as an ideal instrument in the hands of the cosmopolitan Ruism of the Han. Poetry is commoditized in this passage, treated as one more epichoric product that can circulate in the economic world, an analogue to the merchants' wares. To pursue the passage's own economic metaphor, however, this circulation happens not in a free market, but in a tribute economy, where the flows of goods are from the periphery to the center, and where the value of a good is not its market price, but the value placed on it by the state, a value that in turn depends on its perceived usefulness to the people. Poems (and by extension their interpretations) do not, then, circulate freely from one peripheral region to another, nor do they issue from the core. Instead, they are at once a form of tribute (praise of the ruler) and an index of the state's power and stability. This is why happy times produce happy music and the presence of angry music is a symptom of angry times. Only once the interpretation of poetry has been monopolized and packaged by the state can poetry itself be allowed to circulate more freely.

At the same time that the state should be reading the poetic production of the state as an index of its well-being, the Mao Preface envisions an opposing centrifugal circulation of poetry and music, in which the state seeks to control popular sentiment and human relationships by means of the music it produces. Treating the symptom can cure the disease. The Mao Preface's discussion of politics and poetics is thus in some measure self-contradictory. The author of this text (and the hermeneutic tradition that it spawns) cannot decide whether poetry should be a spontaneous product of the people or an instrument of central state power. Some of this confusion arises, no doubt, from the emergence of the Mao Preface many centuries after the poems that it attempts to characterize, as well as from the Preface's passionate conviction that, wherever the poems originated, they must have had

the case under Wudi), but also, more covertly, as a critique of the era of Wudi himself. For the purposes of this book, it is ultimately less important *when* this particular cosmopolitan view took root and to what degree, a question best left to a historical perspective. Rather, my focus is on *how* this cosmopolitan reading of the Classics worked, and how it differed from previous readings, especially in its understanding of scenes of authorship.

something to do with maintaining the equilibrium of the state (something that cosmopolitan state Ruism finds in every text it lays claim to). Whether as symptom or cure, the Mao Preface has a clear sense of the value of poetry; subsequent investigation in Chapters 5–7 will show what relationship this later work bears to the use of the *Songs* in earlier times.

The Greeks held strikingly different views on the relations between poetics and politics. The *Poetics* itself has almost nothing explicit to say about the political, other than Aristotle's general remarks on the differences between poetry and history:

> It's also clear from what I've said that the task of the poet is not the telling of what happened, but rather of what might have happened, and is possible according to either likelihood or necessity. For the historian and the poet differ not only in whether they speak in verse or not (because the texts of Herodotus, put into verse, would still be history, just as much with verse as without). Instead, they differ in this way, that the one speaks about what happened, the other about what may happen. That's why poetry is both more philosophical and weightier than history; poetry speaks more from the general, where history speaks from the particular.
>
> Φανερὸν δὲ ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων καὶ ὅτι οὐ τὸ τὰ γενόμενα λέγειν, τοῦτο ποιητοῦ ἔργον ἐστίν, ἀλλ' οἷα ἂν γένοιτο καὶ τὰ δυνατὰ κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς ἢ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον. ὁ γὰρ ἱστορικὸς καὶ ὁ ποιητὴς οὐ τῷ ἢ ἔμμετρα λέγειν ἢ ἄμετρα διαφέρουσιν (εἴη γὰρ ἂν τὰ Ἡροδότου εἰς μέτρα τεθῆναι καὶ οὐδὲν ἧττον ἂν εἴη ἱστορία τις μετὰ μέτρου ἢ ἄνευ μέτρων)· ἀλλὰ τούτῳ διαφέρει, τῷ τὸν μὲν τὰ γενόμενα λέγειν, τὸν δὲ οἷα ἂν γένοιτο. διὸ καὶ φιλοσοφώτερον καὶ σπουδαιότερον ποίησις ἱστορίας ἐστίν· ἡ μὲν γὰρ ποίησις μᾶλλον τὰ καθόλου, ἡ δ' ἱστορία τὰ καθ' ἕκαστον λέγει. (Aristotle, *Poetics* 1451a36–b7)

These remarks may suggest an implicit theory of the social value of poetry. If poetry speaks in general terms about likely and necessary things that have not actually happened (and is as a consequence a more serious art), the suggestion would seem to be that poetry (i.e., epic and drama) might guide us in the task of connecting the particularities of historical events to more general patterns of human experience. In some respects, this is similar to the views expressed by the Mao Preface, except that the relationship here is iconic rather than indexical: poetry makes sense of the world not because it reveals symptoms of the political, but because it *looks like* the political. Perhaps as a result, Aristotle is uninterested, in the *Poetics*, in whether or not

poetry could be used not merely to diagnose political situations, but to treat them.

It is in the *Politics* that we find an explicit statement of Aristotle's views on this subject. In a discussion of the effects that different musical modes have on people, he asserts that modes must be matched to their audiences:

Thus we should allow those competitors pursuing theater music to use such modes and melodies. The audience is of two kinds: one freeborn and educated, the other coarse and composed of craftsmen and laborers and others like them; and even they should be given contests and spectacles for their relaxation. And just as their souls have been turned away from their natural state, so there are deviations from modes and melodies are high-pitched and chromatic, and that which gives pleasure is that which is suitable to each according to his nature. Thus, permission should be given to the competitors to use some such kind of music for such an audience. But when it comes to education, as I've said, we must use the kind of mode and melody fit for character development. This would be the Dorian, according to what we said earlier.

διὸ ταῖς μὲν τοιαύταις ἁρμονίαις καὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις μέλεσιν ἐατέον χρῆσθαι τοὺς τὴν θεατρικὴν μουσικὴν μεταχειριζομένους ἀγωνιστάς· ἐπεὶ δ' ὁ θεατὴς διττός, ὁ μὲν ἐλεύθερος καὶ πεπαιδευμένος, ὁ δὲ φορτικὸς ἐκ βαναύσων καὶ θητῶν καὶ ἄλλων τοιούτων συγκείμενος, ἀποδοτέον ἀγῶνας καὶ θεωρίας καὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις πρὸς ἀνάπαυσιν· εἰσὶ δὲ ὥσπερ αὐτῶν αἱ ψυχαὶ παρεστραμμέναι τῆς κατὰ φύσιν ἕξεως – οὕτω καὶ τῶν ἁρμονιῶν παρεκβάσεις εἰσὶ καὶ τῶν μελῶν τὰ σύντονα καὶ παρακεχρωσμένα, ποιεῖ δὲ τὴν ἡδονὴν ἑκάστοις τὸ κατὰ φύσιν οἰκεῖον, διόπερ ἀποδοτέον ἐξουσίαν τοῖς ἀγωνιζομένοις πρὸς τὸν θεατὴν τὸν τοιοῦτον τοιούτῳ τινὶ χρῆσθαι τῷ γένει τῆς μουσικῆς. πρὸς δὲ παιδείαν, ὥσπερ εἴρηται, τοῖς ἠθικοῖς τῶν μελῶν χρηστέον καὶ ταῖς ἁρμονίαις ταῖς τοιαύταις. τοιαύτη δ' ἡ δωριστί, καθάπερ εἴπομεν πρότερον· (Aristotle, *Politics* 1342a16–30)

Aristotle clearly shares the Mao Preface's sense that there is a profound connection between musical style and emotional state, but where the Mao Preface emphasizes most of all the inner life of the performer of a song (and only secondarily considers the audience), Aristotle is here exclusively interested in the audience, and in the possible therapeutic effects of music.[10] As such, he finds a particular urgency in the use of appropriate music as part of education

[10] The sentiment is a common one in writing on Greek music; see, for example, Aristides Quintilianus (463 in Barker (1984)).

(sc. of elite young men). This concern would be familiar enough to the author of the Mao Preface; what would perhaps seem strange to that author would be Aristotle's acceptance of deviant music as appropriate for the lower orders of society, a diversion harmless for them even if it would be injurious in a pedagogical context. Clearly, then, Aristotle does think that music has a political dimension and a role in regulating public well-being; his interest in class distinctions (and his indifference to the possibility of improving the lower classes through education) suggests limits to the role that music can play for him.

Aristotle is here in part responding to Plato's notorious views on the role of music in society. Like Aristotle, Plato sees the social role of poetry as iconic rather than indexical, mirroring in its form and content the beliefs and attitudes that citizens should themselves possess. It is (or at least should be, in the idealized cosmopolitan state of the *Republic*) an instrument best left in the hands of the state, if it is to be allowed at all. Plato's Socrates dwells on the point at length at *Republic* 386c3–387b5, citing passage after passage to be excised, "not because they aren't poetical and pleasing for the many to hear, but because however poetical they are, they are that much more not to be heard by children and by those men who must be free, and must fear slavery more than death."[11]

Although elsewhere in the *Republic* Plato's Socrates at least gestures toward the role that good poetry might play in education, here and throughout the emphasis is overwhelmingly on the negative version of the case. Plato's Socrates also insists that the rulers of his state should not themselves be the producers of the myths that are taught therein, but must instead censor the poets who do create these myths, removing inappropriate material (378–379a5).[12] In this we might find the Mao Preface more subtle than Plato's *Republic*; where Plato would have us ban undesirable poetry from the ideal city altogether, the Mao Preface, although aware of the threat posed by poetry, would instead have the state monitor the production of that poetry closely, and then offer its own alternative poetics, which functions in support of the state's goals. Where Plato seems to think largely in terms of the threat that poetry poses to the state, the Mao Preface is more interested in poetry's

[11] οὐχ ὡς οὐ ποιητικὰ καὶ ἡδέα τοῖς πολλοῖς ἀκούειν, ἀλλ' ὅσῳ ποιητικώτερα, τοσούτῳ ἧττον ἀκουστέον παισὶ καὶ ἀνδράσιν οὓς δεῖ ἐλευθέρους εἶναι, δουλείαν θανάτου μᾶλλον πεφοβημένους.

[12] I return to the concept of *muthos* (myth) in Plato in Chapter 4.

capacity to be constitutive of the state. The indexical dimension of the Mao understanding of poetry actually allows a broader role for all kinds of poetry, "good" and "bad," in that the "bad" at least alerts the state to its failings. Both Greek philosophers see the major social role of poetry as lying in education, and although both also recognize that other roles exist, this indexical function is absent from their work. The major difference seems to lie in the Mao Preface's greater interest in why poetry is created, a question both Plato and Aristotle evade in favor of the question of how it is appreciated. This emphasis on the creation of poetry, which I have earlier aligned with indexicality as opposed to iconicity, reinforces the bidirectionality of the relationship between poetry and the state. Plato shows us how music can destroy the city; the Mao Preface suggests rather that bad music is symptomatic of the destruction of the state, and that good music can build it. This last theme does find a home in other sorts of Greek writing about poetry, especially in biographical accounts of poets; I will return to this theme in detail in Chapters 3 and 4. I would thus resist the claim that the emphasis on the positive and literal role that poetry can play in constituting the state is a uniquely Chinese phenomenon, and still more linking that phenomenon with some broader question of *mentalité*.

The salient question is rather why this theme, clearly available within the language of Greek poetics, was not of particular interest to Plato or to Aristotle. The answer may lie in the kinds of cosmopolitan states suggested by the Mao Preface, by Plato's *Republic*, and by Aristotle's *Politics*: the latter two are, respectively, imagining an idealized fantasy of the state and delineating general types of states, whereas the former is instead much more closely associated with a more concrete vision of a universal state (the emergent political order of the Western Han). Poets can be exiled from the ideal city; real empires must instead determine how best to make use of them.

Representation and Transmission

Another point of intersection between the Greek and Chinese poetic traditions lies in their respective interests in representation and in transmission, issues I will first take up in turn, and then attempt to link. In the Greek case, the concept at stake is of course *mimêsis*, a term with a lengthy history in the language, and absolutely central to

Plato's (and therefore Aristotle's) thinking. My goal in what follows is not to present an exhaustive survey of the literature, nor to offer a radically new interpretation of the concept of *mimêsis*, but rather to elucidate certain aspects of this concept for the purposes of my cross-cultural comparison.[13]

In so doing, I draw significantly on the work of Gregory Nagy, and in particular on his understanding of *mimêsis* as reenactment.[14] A Pindaric ode commemorating a victory in the *aulos*-contest at the Pythian Games of 490 BC illustrates nicely the ambivalence of *mimêsis* between "imitation" and "reenactment":

> But when [Athena] had rescued her dear hero [Perseus] from these labors,
> The Maiden gave us this melody of all notes, for the *aulos*,[15]
> Which imitated (*mimêsaito*) with instruments the loud-clanging lament
> Drawn close from the ravening jaws of Euryale [Medusa's sister].
> The goddess discovered it. But she discovered it for mortal men to have,
> And named it the Tune of Many Heads,
> Famed suitor for the contests that rouse the people. . . .
>
> ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ ἐκ τούτων φίλον ἄνδρα πόνων
> ἐρρύσατο παρθένος αὐλῶν τεῦχε πάμφωνον μέλος,
> ὄφρα τὸν Εὐρυάλας ἐκ καρπαλιμᾶν γενύων
> χριμφθέντα σὺν ἔντεσι μιμήσαιτ' ἐρικλάγκταν γόον.
> εὗρεν θεός· ἀλλά νιν εὑροῖσ' ἀνδράσι θνατοῖς ἔχειν,
> ὠνύμασεν κεφαλᾶν πολλᾶν νόμον,
> εὐκλεᾶ λαοσσόων μναστῆρ' ἀγώνων. . . . (Pindar, *Pyth.* 12.18–24)

We might think of the *aulos*-melody here described as an "imitation" of Euryale's lament – except that this is a case where the original "imitated" is of course unknown and unknowable. The melody performed by Midas of Akragas at the Pythian Games in 490 cannot simply have been a "copy" of a lament actually sung for the death of the Medusa by

[13] The remaining bibliography is itself considerable; good starting-points are Halliwell (2002) and Gebauer and Wulf (1996). The latter in particular offers (27–30) a concise account of major trends in the interpretation of *mimêsis* in texts predating Plato. Especially noteworthy are Koller's connection of the term to Dionysian dance–drama, and insistence on "representation" rather than "imitation" as the core meaning.

[14] Nagy (1990b) 43–4, with specific reference to the chorus of Delian maidens in *Hymn. Ap.* 162–4, who can do "*mimêseis* of the voices . . . of all manner of men" πάντων δ' ἀνθρώπων φωνὰς καὶ κρεμβαλιαστὺν μιμεῖσθ' ἴσασιν.

[15] An instrument resembling the modern oboe.

her sister. It may be said, of course, to *represent* that lament, in the sense of evocatively suggesting an obviously unknowable original. More plausibly, I believe, this melody *reenacts* that lament, not merely *evoking* it, but actively *instantiating* it on a regular basis. The last line I have quoted makes this point – the melody is characterized as well known from its use in summoning the people to [musical or athletic] competitions. It is, in other words, regularly repeated in a socially and sacredly marked context, and somehow in that context it performs Euryale's lament at the death of her sister (a lament that of course is a triumph for Perseus and those who honor him). The work of this passage is to honor Midas' performance at the Pythian games by representing it as a reenactment of Euryale's lament (something that the larger context of the poem suggests is true of all auletic music). Moreover, if we consider the possibility that Pindar's own epinician ode to Midas of Akragas may *itself* have been performed to the *aulos* (and would at the very least have been sung), we can see that in some way Pindar's own poetry is in some sense reenacting the lament of Euryale.[16]

A later and clearer use of *mimêsis* in the sense of reenactment comes in the Athenian orator Lysias' (c. 445–380) speech against Andocides, who is accused of profaning the Eleusinian Mysteries:

> For this man wore the ceremonial cloak, and did a *mimêsis* of the rites, and revealed sacred things to the unititated, and spoke with his voice unsayable things, and as for those of the gods whom we consider as such and, with our service and purifications sacrifice and pray to – these gods he mutilated.
>
> οὗτος γὰρ ἐνδὺς στολὴν μιμούμενος τὰ ἱερὰ ἐπεδείκνυ τοῖς ἀμυήτοις καὶ εἶπε τῇ φωνῇ τὰ ἀπόρρητα, τῶν δὲ θεῶν, οὓς ἡμεῖς [θεοὺς] νομίζομεν καὶ θεραπεύοντες καὶ ἁγνεύοντες θύομεν καὶ προσευχόμεθα, τούτους περιέκοψε. (Lysias 6.51)

It is the fact that Andocides' acts are worthy of prosecution that allows us to see that they are understood, not merely as a "representation" of the rites, but as a *reenactment* of them. If ritual is to be understood as performative in the Austinian sense, then its *mimêsis* can raise questions of felicity.[17] If a rite is merely *represented* (or cited, as it were), and there is no claim that it will be felicitous, then the

[16] In offering this reading of the passage, I extend the suggestion offered by Halliwell (2002) that "neither here nor in the other two Pindaric texts cited does 'imitate' give more than a thin sense of what is conveyed" (Halliwell (2002) 19n44).

[17] Austin (1962) 14–15.

crime is presumably less than if the rite is reenacted parodically, performed correctly in all respects save in the sincerity of its celebrants. A representation of the Mysteries, in other words, could and likely would elide the details of the "unsayable things"; a reenactment of the Mysteries (whether sincere or not) *must* make those details explicit.

In recovering and illuminating this notion of *mimêsis* as reenactment (that is, of the reenactment in ritual both of an originary myth and of all previous ritual reenactments), Nagy is careful to remind us of the historical evolution of the meaning of *mimêsis*, away from "reenactment" and toward "imitation or the reproduction of appearances."[18] This is an evolution we can clearly see at work in the writings of Plato:

"Now, which do you think the painter imitates in each case? Does he imitate reality (*to on*), as it is? Or does he imitate appearance, as something appears? Is his *mimêsis* of truth[19] or of appearance?"

"Of appearance," he said.

"Then mimetic art is, I imagine, rather far from the truth. The reason it can make everything is that it grasps only a little of each thing, and at that only an image (*eidôlon*)."

πρὸς πότερον ἡ γραφικὴ πεποίηται περὶ ἕκαστον; πότερα πρὸς τὸ ὄν, ὡς ἔχει, μιμήσασθαι, ἢ πρὸς τὸ φαινόμενον, ὡς φαίνεται, φαντάσματος ἢ ἀληθείας οὖσα μίμησις;

Φαντάσματος, ἔφη.

Πόρρω ἄρα που τοῦ ἀληθοῦς ἡ μιμητικὴ ἐστιν καί, ὡς ἔοικεν, διὰ τοῦτο πάντα ἀπεργάζεται, ὅτι σμικρόν τι ἑκάστου ἐφάπτεται, καὶ τοῦτο εἴδωλον. (*Republic* 598a1–8)

Both the passage that I have quoted from Lysias and this passage from the *Republic* share a concern with the possible failure of *mimêsis*. Where, however, Lysias is concerned with an infelicitous reenactment of ritual (in which the failure lies in the insincerity of the celebrant), Plato is concerned with the truthfulness of the thing represented. Even a perfectly sincere *mimêsis* (and perhaps especially a sincere *mimêsis*)

[18] Nagy (1990b) 42 n125.

[19] Plato's concern here is with whether a *mimêsis* represents something true in the sense of *alêthês*, rather than of *etumos* (an issue I discuss in detail in Beecroft (2006); a summary of that argument appears at the beginning of Chapter 4). Plato's discussion brackets the question of the ritual efficacy or otherwise of a given representation; he is concerned only with whether or not it actually happened.

can be dangerous in Plato's terms, if it offers us a vision of something that never happened. Crucially, then, Plato's turn from *mimêsis*-as-reenactment to *mimêsis*-as-representation is a terminological shift with major implications for the concepts of mythic truth (a concept intrinsic to Plato's world, yet one he has an ambivalent relationship with) and fictionality (a concept emergent, perhaps, in Plato, even as it causes him profound anxiety). The earlier sense of *mimêsis* conveys with it an implicit reluctance to address the objective truth of the myth enacted in ritual,[20] and Plato's concern with whether the events of myth really happened or not radically destabilizes the conventional sense of *mimêsis*. That Plato radically transformed the nature of poetics in the Greek (and by extension Western) tradition is obvious; what may not be so obvious is the extent to which it is in redefining *mimêsis*, and thereby dismissing ritual felicity as a valid ground for evaluating *mimêsis*, that Plato achieves that transformation.

This reorientation of poetics, away from ritual felicity and toward truthful and ethical content and audience impact, is clearly a source of profound anxiety for Aristotle's *Poetics*. The *Poetics* is careful quietly to differ from Plato in several respects on the subject of *mimêsis*. Where Plato had identified narrative, or *diêgêsis*, as distinct from *mimêsis* (*Resp.* 393d3–7), Aristotle makes *diêgêsis* a form of *mimêsis* (*Poet.* 1448a20). Where Plato excoriates Homer and the tragedians for representing heroes as wailing and singing and beating themselves (*Resp.* 605c10–d2), Aristotle is insistent that both epic and tragedy represent humans as better than they are in real life (*Poet.* 1448a1). Finally, and most importantly, where Plato emphasizes that *mimêseis*, because they tend to represent the worst sort of person, draw out the worst sort of emotions in us (*Resp.* 606d1–8), Aristotle dwells instead on the pleasures of *mimêsis* (*Poet.* 1448b8–9).

Even with these distinctions in mind, it is difficult to be entirely certain in which sense Aristotle uses *mimêsis*:

> It seems that there are two causes for poetry as a whole, and both are natural. First, *mimêsis* is natural to humans from birth, and in this respect we differ from all other animals, in that we are the most mimetic, and take our first lessons from *mimêsis*. Second is that all delight in *mimêseis*. An indication that

[20] As will see in Chapter 4, the earlier tradition (there represented by Stesichorus) *can* express doubts about whether or not a given *mimêsis* (say, Homeric epic) is true in the sense of *etumos*, that is, whether or not it is ritually efficacious.

this is true is what happens in fact: when it comes to things that we see with pain in real life, we delight in looking at the most detailed images possible of these same things, such as the appearances of the most despised animals, even when they are corpses. And the reason for this is that understanding is a great pleasure, not only to philosophers, but also to others in like manner, although they partake of it in a lesser way. This is why we delight in seeing pictures, because in looking at them it happens that we understand and infer what each thing [in the picture] is, as when we say "This is that [person or thing] (*houtos ekeinos*)." But if it should happen that one had not seen [the thing represented] before, [the image] would create pleasure, not by the fact it is a *mimêsis*, but because of the finished quality of the painting, or the complexion or because of some other such cause.

Ἔοικασι δὲ γεννῆσαι μὲν ὅλως τὴν ποιητικὴν αἰτίαι δύο τινὲς καὶ αὗται φυσικαί. τό τε γὰρ μιμεῖσθαι σύμφυτον τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐκ παίδων ἐστὶ καὶ τούτῳ διαφέρουσι τῶν ἄλλων ζῴων ὅτι μιμητικώτατόν ἐστι καὶ τὰς μαθήσεις ποιεῖται διὰ μιμήσεως τὰς πρώτας, καὶ τὸ χαίρειν τοῖς μιμήμασι πάντας. σημεῖον δὲ τούτου τὸ συμβαῖνον ἐπὶ τῶν ἔργων· ἃ γὰρ αὐτὰ λυπηρῶς ὁρῶμεν, τούτων τὰς εἰκόνας τὰς μάλιστα ἠκριβωμένας χαίρομεν θεωροῦντες, οἷον θηρίων τε μορφὰς τῶν ἀτιμοτάτων καὶ νεκρῶν. αἴτιον δὲ καὶ τούτου, ὅτι μανθάνειν οὐ μόνον τοῖς φιλοσόφοις ἥδιστον ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ὁμοίως, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ βραχὺ κοινωνοῦσιν αὐτοῦ. διὰ γὰρ τοῦτο χαίρουσι τὰς εἰκόνας ὁρῶντες, ὅτι συμβαίνει θεωροῦντας μανθάνειν καὶ συλλογίζεσθαι τί ἕκαστον, οἷον ὅτι οὗτος ἐκεῖνος· ἐπεὶ ἐὰν μὴ τύχῃ προεωρακώς, οὐχ ᾗ μίμημα ποιήσει τὴν ἡδονὴν ἀλλὰ διὰ τὴν ἀπεργασίαν ἢ τὴν χροιὰν ἢ διὰ τοιαύτην τινὰ ἄλλην αἰτίαν. (*Poet.* 1448b4–19)

Later in this chapter, I examine the overlap in meaning in the Greek verb *poieô* between "compose" and "perform." In like manner, it seems in this extended passage that *mimêsis* must sometimes mean "represent" and sometimes "reenact." When Aristotle discusses our delight in viewing images of the corpses of ugly animals, it is (perhaps) clear that it is representation that is at stake; there seems to be no particular question of such images being a ritual reenactment of myth. That said, the conclusion of the passage suggests otherwise. Aristotle's emphasis on the need for prior experience of the thing depicted, if we are to appreciate a *mimêsis* as such, seems to return us to ritual and reenactment. Our pleasure in watching a *mimêsis* of Hector and Andromache, say, lies in our ability to recognize the connection between "*this*" reenacting of Hector on stage before us, and "*that*" reenacted Hector of myth. If we are unaware of "*that*" Hector, and of why he matters, our appreciation of the drama can

come purely (and, for Aristotle, merely) from aesthetic or formal elements.

Where Plato had sought to remake the Greek conceptual vocabulary, and the play between traditional and Platonic uses of that vocabulary can inform much of our reading of the dialogues,[21] Aristotle, although showing an awareness of Platonic innovations, is here more conservative in his own usage. At the same time, although Aristotle may not explicitly challenge traditional assumptions about the relationship between myth and reenacting ritual, his own clinical and taxonomic predilections tend to downplay both the mythical origins of tragedy and also its ritual efficacy. Even if Aristotle is not actively invested in undermining the traditional understanding of the mimetic relationship between myth and ritual, his tacit disinterest in the terms of that relationship have the effect of perpetuating Plato's own much more aggressive position, and of transforming forever the meaning of *mimêsis* – and thus, in no small way, the history of Western poetics.

Our contemporary understanding of *mimêsis*, then, and of the entire "problem of representation," derives to some extent from Plato's clever misreading of the traditional conceptual vocabulary of the poetics of myth and ritual. This misreading has implications for cross-cultural poetics, which often rely on a static interpretation of *mimêsis*. The most important foundational work in the cross-cultural study of poetics, Earl Miner's *Comparative Poetics*, asserts a distinction between a "mimetic" poetics of the Greco-Roman/Western tradition, derived from drama and defined in terms of Aristotle's *Poetics*, and an affective–expressive poetics, prevalent in many other cultures, derived from lyric and with the Mao Preface to the *Canon of Songs* as a paradigmatic text.[22] Although Miner's dichotomy of poetics has had few explicit followers, more recent critics have, although complicating the relationship between early Chinese poetics and *mimêsis*, tended to take the

[21] I have already adumbrated my discussion in Beecroft (2006), summarized at the beginning of Chapter 4, of the word-pairs *muthos/logos* and *etumos/alêthês*, with which we will see that Plato is also interested in a reimagining of what already-existing conceptual vocabulary might mean. In both cases, as with *mimêsis*, it is Plato's reworking that has endured as the unmarked meaning of the terms, both in later Greek usage and in later European interpretation of Greek culture.

[22] Miner (1990) 24–5. The concepts remain largely undefined, except through the gesture of identifying their most significant textual embodiments.

post-Platonic meaning of *mimêsis* for granted.[23] Further nuance is called for here, especially on the generalist-comparativist level of discussion.

Even scholarship that engages in a more concrete and historicized way with Chinese poetics evinces this tendency. In his massive and indispensable *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, Stephen Owen traces the history of Chinese poetics, from pre-Qin (and thus, pre-Mao) texts, through the Mao Preface, as far forward as the seventeenth century.[24] Owen, rightly, finds the explicit poetics of the earliest periods quite alien to the notion of Platonic *mimêsis*. Even in later texts, Owen finds no real equivalent to *mimêsis*. The closest equivalent he finds is in the "Spirit Thought" (*shensi* 神思) chapter of *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, with Liu Xie (465–522)'s concept of the "concept-image" (*yixiang* 意象) that the skilled carpenter uses to construct an axe.[25] As Owen carefully puts it, it is not that the possibility that the axe *represents* the concept-image is actually excluded; it is simply not addressed. The *yixiang* is perhaps more the formal cause of the axe, rather than the axe a *mimêsis* of its *yixiang*.

All of these scholars are clearly right in finding in classical Chinese poetics (especially before the impact of Buddhism and thus of Sanskrit philosophy and poetics in the Six Dynasties and Tang eras) a dearth of concepts analogous to *mimêsis* in the Platonic sense, and a more general lack of concern with what we would now call the "problem of representation." Perhaps (and reasonably so) reluctant to call on a notion of *mentalité*, none of these scholars provide much of an account of why early Chinese poetics should be so nonmimetic. Although I share their general reluctance to think in terms of a *mentalité*, I believe that there are other explanations for the nonmimetic aspect of early Chinese poetics, chiefly historical in nature. Owen aside, the other scholars we have looked at are generally reluctant to think of Chinese poetics (especially *vis-à-vis mimêsis*) as dynamic rather than static, although Miner, for example, does allow that Horatian poetics, with its *miscuit*

[23] For example, Zhang (1992) 98–100; Saussy (1993) 95.

[24] Owen (1992).

[25] Owen (1992) 204–5. As one of the anonymous readers for this manuscript helpfully points out, the frequent use of animal cries and other onomatopoieic sounds in the *Songs* constitutes a possible further example of Chinese *mimêsis* (in the post-Platonic sense), which complements my discussion below.

utile dulci (*Ars* 343), represents something of an affective–expressive innovation in Western poetics.[26]

Even more critically, they do not read the term *mimêsis* itself in the diachronic context we have just examined, and tend to concentrate on the explicit poetics of treatises and philosophic texts rather than the implicit poetics of, for example, the scenes of authorship in commentary and poets' lives.[27] As I will show in Chapter 3, the implied poetics operative in the accounts of Amphion and Terpander amply documents the Greek fascination with the political dimensions of the affective–expressive poetics of the Mao Preface, namely that (potentially deeply personal) poetry can be quite literally constitutive of the state. Plato offers a negative confirmation of this fascination, suggesting at *Republic* 607c3–8 that "if anyone can speak to how pleasurable poetry and *mimêsis* might be necessary to a well-regulated city-state, we would gladly welcome that poetry in" (εἴ τινα ἔχοι λόγον εἰπεῖν ἡ πρὸς ἡδονὴν ποιητικὴ καὶ ἡ μίμησις, ὡς χρὴ αὐτὴν εἶναι ἐν πόλει εὐνομουμένῃ, ἅσμενοι ἂν καταδεχοίμεθα). Plato's very rejection of the possibility speaks, obviously, to his awareness of the possible claim that poetry might have to a role in the regulation of the *polis*, a claim held widely (if implicitly) in Archaic and early Classical times. But what of the converse side of the argument? Is there evidence for something approximating a Chinese poetics of *mimêsis*? I will discuss a strong possible case in Chapter 7, but for the moment I will turn instead to a concept that might, unexpectedly, be doing the same work.

The characteristically modest Confucius is especially humble in relation to the so-called Confucian classics, which the later Chinese tradition credits him with having edited. The association of Confucius with the editing of the classics is, as we have seen, quite late, and is not mentioned in the *Analects*. The most famous version of this modesty in the *Analects* is the expression "I transmit and do not create." Like

[26] Miner (1990) 26. It should be emphasized that the nature of both Zhang's and Saussy's work does not require them, in this context, to read classical Chinese poetics diachronically, something they both assuredly do in other contexts, and indeed within the texts cited.

[27] Miner (1990) 24n9 in fact develops the notion of an implicit poetics, and as I have observed already, it is from him that I take the term, although he uses it strictly of cultures that develop concepts of poetics but do not encode those concepts in textual form. I here extend the usage to include the implicit dimensions of poetics within cultures, such as early Greece and China, that *do* develop explicit poetics.

all of the *Analects*, this phrase is contained within a short anecdotal passage:

> The Master said: I transmit and do not create. I trust and love the ancient, and dare to compare myself with Old Peng. (*Analects* 7.1)
>
> 子曰：述而不作，信而好古，竊比於我老彭。(論語：述而 60)

The passage is susceptible to several interpretations. Much depends on the sense of the reference to Old Peng at the end of the passage. Peng (glossed somewhat inadequately by Arthur Waley as "the Chinese Nestor")[28] was a legendary minister whose lifespan extended from the Xia dynasty across the Shang and into the Zhou. The epithet "old," a common term of endearment in Chinese, is in his case earned; the tradition reports that he lived over eight hundred years. In this role as a quasi-immortal he features prominently in the Daoist philosophical collection the *Zhuangzi* (where his lifespan is frequently characterized as short, for paradoxical effect),[29] and in later Daoist tradition as the originator of various practices of longevity. This aspect of Peng Zu's story is undoubtedly present in the Confucian anecdote as well, but for Confucius Peng's status as a worthy minister (at times serving under decidedly unworthy rulers) must also be taken into account. The passage, then, makes a rather less modest claim than it at first seems to, representing Confucius as rivaling a great minister of the past through his activities of collecting and transmitting ancient teachings. Confucius, the anecdote suggests, views Peng Zu's longevity not as a guide to achieving the same, but rather as a figure for the endurance of tradition; the historical continuity represented by Peng Zu's long service will be rivaled by the historical continuity with the past that Confucius offers to the future through his transmission of ancient teachings.

In addition, this passage conveys an implicit message about performance. We must remember that the *Analects* is, or at least claims to be, a transcript of performance – that is, a transcript of various sayings and conversations of Confucius rather than a coherent treatise written by the Master himself (a phenomenon reminiscent of course of the Socratic dialogues of Plato). E. Bruce and A. Taeko Brooks suggest

[28] Waley (1939) 123.
[29] See for example 齊物論 (Cao (1982) 30).

that Chapter 7 of the *Analects*, which begins with this passage, may date to around 450 BC, and to the hands of Master Zeng, the first of Confucius' followers not to have known him personally.[30] If they are right, then of course the claim to transmit rather than create assumes a special urgency; Master Zeng's performance of Confucius' teachings gains legitimacy through the construction of Confucius as himself a transmitter, rather than a creator, with Master Zeng as the next in a line of transmission of ancient teachings, rather than as a disciple whose access to the Master himself is tenuous. Even if we do not accept the Brookses' dating, the passage is certainly useful for those later in the tradition who wish to emphasize the continuity of their own practices with those of the Master himself.

But what, precisely, is meant by "transmit" here? The word I have translated (following Sinological convention) as "transmit," *shu* 述, has a complex range of meanings. The second-century *Shuowen* dictionary glosses it as *xun* 循, or "follow," but its semantic range is broader. The *Doctrine of the Mean* (*Zhongyong* 中庸), a moralizing document contained in our *Record of Rites* that uses the voice of Confucius, uses the term in ways suggestive of the Greek term *kleos*, which refers both to fame and to the representation of fame in heroic epic.[31] At times, the primary meaning of *shu* seems to be the actual achievements of a great man, viewed as the continuity of a tradition:

> The Master said: Those who were without regret, could only be King Wen of Zhou, with King Ji as his father and King Wu as his son. The father acted, and the son continued. He carried on the tasks of King Tai, King Ji and King Wen. He wore armor once and held all under heaven.
>
> 子曰，無憂者，其惟文王乎，以王季為父，以武王為子，父作之，子述之，武王纘大王，王季，文王，之緒，壹戎衣而有天下，(中庸18.1–2, 禮記 885)

Although the qualities with which Wu "continues" his ancestors may be fundamentally moral, the reference to his conquests reminds us that these are moral qualities best seen in action. The performance of his likeness to his ancestors (which takes the form of world conquest) is *performative* as well; in continuing their virtues he is also reenacting them, in a manner that is felicitous (at least from the perspective of

[30] Brooks and Brooks (1998) 39.
[31] Nagy (1999a) 16–18.

the Zhou house). The gloss of *shu* 述 with *zuan* 纘 "carry on," in the following clause reinforces the sense of the term as the glory due to Wu's actions because they continued the actions of his ancestors. The conduct of King Wu is admirable, the passage suggests, precisely because his actions reenact those of his ancestors. I will return to this notion of mimetic performance in Chapter 7. For now, I will turn to another passage in the *Doctrine of the Mean*, in which the meaning of *shu* seems rather different:

> The Master said: To live in simplicity and obscurity, and yet practice marvels, in order to have posterity in later eras, this is not what I do.
>
> 子曰・素隱行怪・後世有述焉・吾弗為之矣・(中庸11.1, 禮記881)

As a later portion of this passage makes clear, the Confucius of this passage is claiming that virtuous conduct should be an end in itself, not a means toward fame, whether in life or after it. *Shu*, then, refers not only to the praiseworthy quality of having one's actions follow those of favored ancestors, but also to being talked about as having done so. It is not only a quality that increases one's own glory through metonymic connection to ancestors or predecessors, but also a quality that one may hope to achieve posthumously through having descendants or followers. It is also, then, a quality that can point in both directions.

This bidirectionality is important; as it happens, much of what is said about the virtue of the early Western Zhou (the era embodied by King Wu) seems to have been an ideologically motivated construction, beginning a century or so before Confucius' time and culminating in the Ruist commentarial traditions of the Han dynasty.[32] In particular, archaeological evidence has shown that the ritual practices of the early Western Zhou were essentially identical to those of the Shang, and that the Zhou only began to develop their own rituals around 850 BC.[33] Zhou ritual underwent another radical revision in the half-century before Confucius' own lifetime.[34] The ideals of the present, in other words, were represented as reenactments, or "continuations," of the

[32] I discuss this phenomenon from several perspectives throughout Chapters 5–7.

[33] Falkenhausen (2006) 2; Li (2006) 102 n34 accepts Jessica Rawson's dating of the Late Western Zhou Ritual Reform to the period 899–858 BC.

[34] The so-called "Middle Springs and Autumns Ritual Restructuring." See Falkenhausen (2006) 293–325.

past. In the case of Confucius, this transmission is doubly disingenuous; not only does "Confucianism" in general project its own agenda backward onto the early Zhou, but of course our sources for the words of Confucius (including this very passage) postdate the man himself. Confucius' own transmission was more creative than he admits, but even more importantly, he was himself created by later generations who then represented themselves as merely transmitting Confucius' own transmission of the virtues of the past. What is represented as a continuous (and in part genealogical) transmission can be shown to be punctuated by discontinuities and creative appropriations, reenactments that may claim fidelity to the past, but whose higher purpose is efficacy in the present. The Confucian notion of "transmission" (*shu*), although certainly not identical with Aristotelian *mimêsis*, thus clearly does some of the same work for its culture, acting as the conceptualization of the relationship between the narrativized mytho-historical past and ritualized performance in the present.

Composition and Performance

One of the central questions about the early poetic traditions of both Greece and China relates to the medium in which they were created: were Homeric epic and Archaic lyric on the one hand, and the songs of the *Canon of Songs* on the other, initially created with or without the aid of the technology of writing, and when and how did these "texts" come to be seen as principally embodied in written form? The question has generated a large and controversial bibliography, especially although not exclusively on the Greek side, and I cannot expect that my work here will fundamentally alter the terms of debate, or change the minds of the most devoted partisans of each side.[35] I do believe, however, that the explicit and implied poetics I examine in this book provides some possible clues, if not to the truth about these matters, at least to the state of debate on these questions in panchoric and

[35] The foundational works on this subject are Parry 1971 and Lord 1960. Finnegan 1977 and Foley 1990 offer good discussions of earlier critiques of Parry and Lord's work. For a more recent assessment, emphasizing more recent work that seeks to build on Parry and Lord in new directions emphasizing especially the performance aspect of Greek epic, see Bakker and Kahane (eds.) (1997) and Bakker (1999b) 163–83.

cosmopolitan texts. On the Greek side, I have argued elsewhere that accounts of Homer's blindness imply assumptions about the role of writing in the composition of Homeric epic – those who insist that Homer was blind from childhood, or that he became blind as an adult and before his poetic career began, either explicitly or implicitly assume that he composed his works without writing, whereas those who dispute the claim for blindness generally also insist that Homer "wrote" his poems.[36] Throughout the remainder of this book, we will also encounter numerous examples of scenes of authorship in which it is the circulation of a poem in oral, rather than in textual, form that is seen to embody that poem's value and meaning. I find, however, an interesting difference between how these processes work in the Hellenic and Zhou worlds: both cultures possess terms that initially seem to encompass both composition and performance (without the explicit aid of writing in either case), but where the Greek verb *poieô* gradually comes to be associated exclusively with composition, the Chinese expression *fu shi* shifts instead toward performance. I explore this claim in more detail below, but first it will be necessary to make a case for the role of orality in the composition of the *Canon of Songs*.[37]

Although early–twentieth century Chinese scholars had placed a greatly increased emphasis on the folkloric quality of the *Songs*, and especially the *Airs* (a quality that had, in various guises, been a feature of their interpretation from the beginning), it was only with C. H. Wang's *The Bell and the Drum*, published in 1974, that we find the first systematic attempt to apply ideas of oral-traditional poetics, as developed by Milman Parry and Albert Lord, to the collection. This attempt proved deeply controversial, for both good and bad reasons.[38]

Critics rightly pointed out the difficulty of applying Parry–Lord definitions of the formula to a poetic tradition in which lines are

[36] Beecroft (2010).

[37] The case for orality in Homer and in Archaic lyric has been made frequently enough and in enough detail not to require further elaboration by me here, as the bibliographical note above suggests. With the *Canon of Songs*, the case is less well established.

[38] In what follows I draw mostly on Fusek (1979), a review of Wang Ch'ing-hsien (1974); the views expressed there by Fusek are shared, I believe, by many of those who do not accept Wang's conclusions.

four characters long, with a caesura between the second and third characters. Certainly, the boundary between formulaic language and the conventions of natural speech becomes problematic at this level. Further, critics have argued with justice that the much shorter length of the *Songs* as compared to Greek or South Slavic epic at least mitigates the comparative advantage of the oral-formulaic system by which epic is generated; in the case of a short poem memorization is at least as efficient as generation by formulaic system. It is certainly also true that writing played a much greater role in the Western Zhou than it did in Archaic Greece, as the archaeological and textual records attest.[39] Because writing could certainly have been used in the composition of the *Songs*, and because it was clearly used in the transmission of many texts, literary and otherwise, the argument goes, there is no need to imagine the use of any system of oral composition.

Although I accept the force of these arguments, I am obliged to draw attention to weaker points of the claim that the *Songs* are a product of textuality. Both advocates and critics of orality in the *Songs* place undue emphasis on the question of percentages: for advocates, the presence of a given percentage of "formulaic" language in the *Songs* is proof of their oral origin, whereas opponents dispute the statistics and claim anyway that a higher percentage is needed. Both camps ignore the central point of Parry's and Lord's model, which is that formulaic language is a system for generating poetry, and that, given a large enough corpus (which we by definition do not have, at least in the case of Homeric epic), *all* language in an oral poem could be shown to be formulaic.[40] In the composition of the *Songs*, questions of orality have become confused with questions of the social status of the composers of poems, and with their possible folkloric content and simplicity of language. Oral poetry need not be folk poetry, and also need not be simple, or produced by persons of low status.

Perhaps more importantly, new work in Classics and new Sinological evidence alike suggests that it is time to reassess the question of

[39] On this point, see Shaughnessey (1997) 2–6, summed up by a quotation from Herrlee Creel: "We simply have to accept the fact that the [Zhou] were a people who liked to write books."

[40] See the Introduction for this point as well as Beecroft (2009), where I discuss this issue in more detail, with respect to Chinese poetry of the Han and Six Dynasties periods.

the orality of the *Songs*. Recent work on orality in Hellenic studies has placed a greater emphasis on performance, as opposed to orality *per se*, and scholars such as Egbert Bakker have shown that even if the question of the use of writing in the composition of Homeric epic is bracketed, it is clear that those epics depend on performance for the activation of significant elements of their meaning.[41] This new turn to performance could bear fruit for Early China studies as well, as evidence abounds for the importance of performance in the circulation and meaning of the *Songs*, from the many anecdotes about their performance in our historical texts to the fact that the earliest strands of the *Analects* represent Confucius as primarily concerned, not with the words of the *Songs*, but with their music.[42] If the Zhou did indeed love writing books, the evidence is also clear that they were no less fond of singing songs.

Recent archaeological finds have added important new evidence as well. In a remarkable article, Martin Kern has examined the texts of several recent manuscript finds of texts that include or quote the *Songs*.[43] The (already known) textual fragments associated with the three schools of classical interpretation other than the Mao school show no more than 7–8% variation in the texts they transmit, mostly minor graphic variants of characters of a kind common in pre-Qin texts, where the phonetic element of a character remains relatively stable, whereas the "radical," indicative of the character's semantics, can be more fluid. By contrast, each of the recently excavated manuscripts containing part of the *Songs* differs from our received texts in a stunning 25–40% of the characters.[44] Further, these differences are not always as straightforward as those in the received tradition; sometimes characters are used that are homonymous with our received texts, but share nothing of the graphical or semantic qualities, such as the use of 州 "island" for 舟 "boat," 居 "dwell" for 車 "cart," and 騷 "agitate" for 掃 "sweep."[45] The utter graphic dissimilarity of these pairs of characters (in spite of their homophony) suggests, as Kern

[41] Bakker and Kahane (eds.) (1997) and Bakker (1999b) 163–83.
[42] Van Zoeren (1991) 48.
[43] Kern (2005) 149–93.
[44] Kern (2005) 156.
[45] Kern (2005) 179–80. See 160–74 for a full discussion of the variants found in archaeologically recovered manuscripts.

argues, that the manuscripts that contain them would have been all but impenetrable to someone who expected to gain access to the *Songs* through a textual tradition alone; they would certainly have required the assistance of a teacher to guide the reader to the correct interpretation of the characters, and are in fact suggestive of a world in which manuscripts of the poems are ancillary to the primary, oral and performed, transmission.[46] Given that these recently recovered manuscripts date mostly to the fourth to third centuries BC, long after the imagined date of composition of the poems (and, indeed, in an era in which written texts were undeniably proliferating) suggests *a fortiori* that writing was unlikely to have been central to the production and transmission of the poems several centuries earlier. Accordingly, although I believe caution is in order in assimilating the *Songs* to Parry–Lord oral-traditional poetics, it seems clear that orality and performance, not textuality, should be the dominant paradigms through which the early history of this collection is understood.

Another feature of the *Songs* that emerges from an examination of the textual and archaeological record is the unstable nature of the anthology. Even our historical texts preserve many examples of poems other than those in our collection, referring to them in the same language as they refer to those in our collection. Archaeological finds such as *Confucius' Discussion of the Songs*, which claims to talk about our anthology (even to the extent of dividing the poems into the same four sections our text does), include still more poems otherwise unknown to us. The existence of poems once thought equivalent to those in the *Songs* but subsequently excluded may reflect the ambiguities of written classical Chinese: most of our texts refer simply to *shi* 詩, which can, in different contexts, mean "a song," "songs," or "the *Songs*," there being no way to distinguish singular from plural, or a collective noun from a title.[47] I would argue that this is not so much a question of our texts failing to capture a subtlety of meaning that the language was ill equipped to handle. Rather, I would suggest that, before the "Classics" came to be referred to as such in the third century BC, there was no need to distinguish canonical from noncanonical texts, because

[46] Kern (2005) 183.

[47] For the point, see the introduction and Nylan (2001) 20; the same is true of the *Documents*, the *Rites*, and the *Music*.

all songs were potentially *Songs*, and could be put to the same uses. In other words, the development of the term "canon" *jing* not only made it possible to title the collection and disambiguate the *Canon of Songs* from the larger body of songs in circulation, but also made it necessary to think in terms of this distinction. As such, the closing of the canon of the *Songs* dates to very nearly the era of the institutionalization of the classics a century or so later and is part of the same process of reification that ensured the importance of the *Songs* in the cosmopolitan world of the Han.

We can thus see that in the pre-Qin era the *Songs* were not a canonical anthology with defined contents and fixed interpretations, but rather the notional total of the poetic production of the era, certainly circulating in texts (or at least in transcripts), but also active in the memory of educated individuals, and performed frequently in a variety of settings. That the *Songs* (or rather, that songs) enjoyed such a status perhaps accounts for the relationship between composition and performance in the Eastern Zhou, and the differences between that relationship and the one that obtained in Archaic and Classical Greece, the question to which I now return.

As I have already suggested, the words used to talk about composition and performance in both Greek and Chinese suggest that in each case these concepts only gradually became distinguishable, and in different ways in each language. The Greek verb *poieô* ποιέω and its derivatives (it is obviously the source of our modern "poem," "poet," and "poetry"), with the root meaning of "do" or "make," is generally, in poetic contexts, translated as "compose," or even, by those who minimize the role of oral composition and transmission, as "write." The expression *fu shi* 賦詩 (and its equivalent, *fu* X, with X being the title of a poem), by contrast, more frequently connotes performance. Conventional translations for *fu shi* range from "presenting odes"[48] to

[48] Saussy (1993) 61; Lewis (1999) 148. See also Lewis (1999) 166, where he distinguishes *fu shi* from *yin shi* 引詩: for Lewis, in the former poems are cited by title in the narrative, but lyrics are not written out, and usually there is an exchange of verses; in the latter, an actor within the narrative performs the poem, usually without any response, as part of a larger rhetorical speech. There are, however, contexts in which poems (especially so-called "lost poems," more accurately described as "transmitted poems or fragments not in the *Canon of Songs*") can be quoted after the verb *fu*; see Duke Xi 5.

"reciting"[49] them; in each case, the emphasis on the speech-act of performance rather than on the creative process captures the generally understood sense of the term.

The word *fu* itself has a complex history: the Han dictionary the *Shuowen Jiezi* glosses it as *lian* 斂 "gather, collect revenue." Certainly, many of its uses in pre-Qin texts align with this general sense of raising taxes or troops, or hiring assassins.[50] In addition to its use in describing the performance of poems from the *Songs*, *fu* can also refer to the process of narration in poetry (as one of the six figures of poetry identified by the Mao Preface), and will come to be used as the generic term for a particularly spectacular form of prose-poem, popular in the Western Han. Martin Kern, among others, has sought to identify common ground among these three meanings, all of which for him draw on a core meaning of "presentation."[51] Kern develops this meaning in terms of the Han "genre" of the *fu*, which he sees as opposed to the *ge* 歌 or "song," with the former representing extended recited performances of verbal art, and the latter briefer sung performances.[52] Importantly, he identifies the literary form of the *fu* with performance, emphasizing its perlocutionary force on its audience as at least as significant as its content, and showing that later "readers" of the genre (in textual form) fail to experience that perlocutionary effect, and consequently mistakenly condemn the *fu* of an earlier time.[53] Also

[49] Van Zoeren (1991) 40.

[50] For the first possibility, see, for example, *Zuozhuan* Duke Yin 4; for the second, for example, Duke Cheng 2; for the third, for example, Duke Yin 11.

[51] Kern (2003) 394–401. For a related view, see Levy (1988) 34–7, who glosses *fu* as "enumeration."

[52] Kern (2003) 401. Kern argues, persuasively, that it would be a mistake to think of *fu* as a genre, at least in the Western Han, because the same texts are often referred to as *ci* 辭, *song* 頌, *cifu*, or *songfu*, and works identified as *shelun* 設論, *duiwen* 對問, *qi* 七, *sao* 騷, and *diaowen* 弔文 are formally indistinguishable from those identified as *fu*. A revealing cross-cultural parallel might be the evolution of *epos* in Greek from an unmarked meaning of "speech" through "poetry" to "epic poetry" (Calame (1991) 187). In both cases, the term begins by referring in a relatively unmarked way to speech, then refers to a specialized kind of heightened speech, and finally to a particular literary genre.

[53] Kern (2003) 427–8. The genre of the *fu* is notorious for its elaborate descriptions of sensory experiences and events, often contained within a frame that seeks to redirect the listener away from such experience and toward ethical concerns, often in the form of a staged debate in which the figure of the audience is modeled in one of the interlocutors; performance is thus critical to the intended effects of the genre.

importantly from my perspective, he points out that two major *fu* of the period (the *Yufu* 漁賦 found in *Chuci* 楚辭 and Dongfang Shuo 東方朔's *Da Ke Nan* 答客難) are each represented in one (earlier) source as actual dialogues between real people, including their authors, and in another (later) source as literary works consisting of imaginary dialogues.[54] This could, as Kern suggests, either mean that the earlier sources are correctly recording these *fu* as real dialogues, where the later source has fictionalized them, or (as Kern believes) that they were performance pieces all along, and were represented as "real" in earlier texts but as reified works of literature in later texts, as literature became more textually embodied in the Eastern Han. I believe that something similar is at work in the use *fu* in the expression *fu shi*, meaning "to recite a poem."

Although some notion of "recite" and thus of "perform" is always inherent in the phrase *fu shi*, there are situations in the *Zuozhuan* where the emphasis is clearly on composition, and others where it is clearly on performance. An example of the former is found in the third year of Duke Yin (720 BC):

> Duke Zhuang of Weì took as a wife the younger sister of Dechen, the heir-apparent of Qi. She was named Zhuang Jiang, and was pretty but childless. The people of Wei composed *Great Lady* about her. Then the Duke took a wife from Chen, named Li Gui.
>
> 莊公娶于齊東宮得臣之妹 · 曰莊姜 · 美而無子 · 衛人所為賦碩人也 · 又娶于陳 · 曰厲嫣 · (左傳 隱公 3 p. 53)

The syntax of the phrasing (*suo wei fu* "*Shi Ren*"), combined with the fact that this is the same account of the poem's origin that we find in the Mao commentaries, suggests that the meaning here must be "to compose." We are presumably to think that the people of Wei (or some element thereof) actually performed the poem as well, but the emphasis is clearly on their composition of it to suit the specific circumstances of the moment. Note that the text of the poem, for example, identifies Zhuang Jiang through her familial and marital relationships; this is not a case of adapting an existing poem to fit a particular situation, but rather of creating a poem to respond to that situation.

[54] Kern (2003) 402.

At other times, especially in diplomatic episodes, the recitation implied by *fu shi* equally clearly means "to perform a poem" [i.e., one already in existence]:

> The Earl of Zheng met with the Duke of Lu at Fei, and he also[55] asked for peace with Jin. The Duke accomplished this for both of them. The Earl of Zheng feasted with the Duke of Lu at Fei. Zijia (of Zheng) recited *The Wild Geese*, and Ji Wenzi (of Lu) said, "My humble lord does not altogether lack this quality." Wenzi then recited *The Fourth Month*, and Zijia recited the fourth stanza of *Galloping*. Wenzi recited the fourth stanza of *Gathering the Thornfern*. The Earl of Zheng bowed, and the Duke of Lu bowed in reply. (Duke Wen 13 = 613 BC)
>
> 鄭伯會公于棐, 亦請平于晉, 公皆成之。鄭伯于公宴于棐。子家賦鴻雁, 季文子曰, 寡君未免於此, 文子賦四月, 子家賦載馳之四章, 文子賦采薇之四章, 鄭伯拜, 公答拜。(左傳 文公13 p. 333)

I return to this passage in Chapter 6 and I explain its historical context there. For the moment, my principal interest lies in the fact that this anecdote, and others like it, clearly use *fu shi* in the sense of "to perform or recite," emphasizing the speech-act over the act of creation, and necessarily viewing the two as separate. The diplomats in question are not thought of as improvising poems on the spot (something made especially clear by the reference to the singing of individual stanzas from two of the poems); rather, they are activating existing poems in a new context. Such uses are greatly in the majority in the *Zuozhuan*. Clearly for the compilers of the *Zuozhuan*, probably writing in the fourth century BC, there is at least some ambiguity around the phrase *fu shi*; ordinarily it will mean "to recite already-existing poems," but it can at times mean instead "to recite a new poem." The lack of interest in making a terminological distinction between the two processes is, I think, significant, and reveals an implicit poetics for which the context in which a poem is performed is potentially a more authoritative "scene of authorship" than the context in which the poem was first created. This conviction, as I will argue in more detail in Chapters 5 and 6, is a marker of the manner in which the *Songs* circulated in the panchoric era that the *Zuozhuan* describes (and toward the end of which it was itself composed). To anticipate my later arguments, this emphasis on performance rather than on composition allows the

[55] We hear a few lines earlier of a similar request from the Marquis of Wei.

Songs to shift from one epichoric context to another, and to function as a panchoric literary and political language. It is in this period that I identify a model of authorship quite distinct from that emerging contemporaneously in Greece.

That this model is the product of contingent historical forces, and not of *mentalité*, however, is shown by the emergence in the cosmopolitan Han of a countervailing willingness to privilege composition over performance, a tendency that will prevail in the remainder of Chinese literary history, even if the vestiges of the *Zuozhuan*'s approach continued to have cultural value. In the first century BC, the great Han dynasty historian Sima Qian composed a famous letter to his friend Ren An, discussing his decision to accept castration rather than execution as a punishment for his involvement in court intrigue, and cites the examples of similarly unfortunate officials whose advice offended their rulers: 屈原放逐, 乃賦離騷。[56] "Qu Yuan was exiled, and so he recited (in the sense of composed) *Encountering Sorrow*." Qu Yuan's life-story (and in particular his banishment after making unpopular recommendations in foreign policy to his ruler, the King of Chu) is so inextricably linked in Sima Qian's own work with the composition of *Encountering Sorrow* (the *Li Sao*) that the historian must mean that Qu Yuan "composed" his poem, rather than that he "reenacted" an existing work, an interpretation reinforced by the fact that, in his biography of Qu Yuan in the *Records of the Grand Historian*, Sima Qian uses the verb *zuo* 作, unambiguously referring to composition, to describe Qu Yuan's action.[57] Sima Qian argues that Qu Yuan set down his poem in a fixed form for all time, in specific reaction to circumstances in his own life, and it is this conception of authorship that will remain operative from Sima's time forward.[58]

If *fu shi* tended over time toward performance, the Greek verb *poieô*, equally capable of double meaning, had a powerful tendency (partly, as I have suggested, etymological) to move toward composition. Much contemporary discussion of *poieô* downplays associations with performance altogether: Andrew Ford is representative of many

[56] *Han Shu* 62 (司馬遷傳) p. 2735.

[57] 憂愁幽思而作離騷, "He contemplated [the situation] with melancholy and composed the *Li Sao*." 史記/列傳 屈原 p. 2482.

[58] In fact, thanks to Sima Qian's biography of him, Qu Yuan becomes precisely the paradigm of the unrecognized but brilliant author and a sign of the cultural capital associated with poetic composition even when in opposition to the state.

scholars in reading the term *poiêtês*, "poet," in contrast to *aoidos*, "singer," arguing that the two terms are intended to distinguish the act of making, or composition, from that of singing, or performance;[59] further, that both terms emerge as a complementary pair in the midst of the fifth-century increase in the place of writing in the circulation of poetry.[60] Barbara Graziosi, although disputing Ford's necessary connection between *poiêsis* as a term and writing, also generally agrees with him, analogizing from the use of the verb *poieô* on pottery that it refers to the creator of a work, as distinct from its performer.[61] Of course, recognizing someone as a "creator" and as a "writer" are two very different things.

Not all uses of *poieô* in Archaic and Classical Greek are so straightforwardly assignable to the category of composition (as distinct from performance). Ford draws attention in passing to Theognis 1.713, a line that I have discussed elsewhere with respect to concepts of truth,[62] and that is now worth examining in further detail. The lines I will discuss are part of a larger section discussing the notion that it is only wealth that matters to men, using the story of Sisyphus, of whose return from the dead the poet expresses skepticism, as a mythical counterexample:

> But even from there [sc. the underworld] the hero Sisyphus returned to the light of the sun through his own cleverness –
> Not even if you can make lies that look like truth, and you have a tongue like that of worthy Nestor, like to the gods,
>
> ἀλλ' ἄρα κἀκεῖθεν πάλιν ἦλυθε Σίσυφος ἥρως ἐς φάος ἠελίου σφῆισι πολυφροσύναις –
> οὐδ' εἰ ψεύδεα μὲν ποιοῖς ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα, γλῶσσαν ἔχων ἀγαθὴν Νέστορος ἀντιθέου (Theognis 1.710–15)

In this case, it seems difficult to read the verb as simply equivalent to authorial creation. Certainly, lies are authored, but it is in their performance that they become lies (and, generally speaking, lies are

[59] Strict adherents to Parry's and Lord's views on composition and performance may argue that these concepts are not separable in the context of an oral-traditional culture. Ford's argument does not preclude, I believe, the inseparability of these concepts at an earlier stage in the history of Greek literature.

[60] Ford (2002) 131.

[61] Graziosi (2002) 42.

[62] Beecroft (2006).

a form of fiction in which we do not separate the acts of composition and performance). The simile with Nestor is telling; Nestor is a famous speaker, often composing what must be extemporaneous speeches in reaction to others in assembly; he is not an author or a poet, preparing works in advance for himself or others to perform.[63]

Even more tellingly, from the point of view of comparative poetics, the verb *poieô* and its derivatives must sometimes refer to performance even within Aristotle's *Poetics*, as an examination of a couple of passages will show:[64]

Epic-making and the making of tragedy and comedy and the making of dithyrambs and most *aulos*-music and *cithara*-music are all, taken as a whole, *mimêseis*.

ἐποποιία δὴ καὶ ἡ τῆς τραγῳδίας ποίησις ἔτι δὲ κωμῳδία καὶ ἡ διθυραμβοποιητικὴ καὶ τῆς αὐλητικῆς ἡ πλείστη καὶ κιθαριστικῆς πᾶσαι τυγχάνουσιν οὖσαι μιμήσεις τὸ σύνολον· (*Poetics*, 1447a13–16)

This conflation of poetry and music should be read in conjunction with Aristotle's discussion a few lines later of the relationship between poetry and prose:

That art that uses either plain words or meter, whether one form of meter alone or a mixture of them, is without a name even up till now.

ἡ δὲ μόνον τοῖς λόγοις ψιλοῖς <καὶ> ἡ τοῖς μέτροις καὶ τούτοις εἴτε μιγνῦσα μετ' ἀλλήλων εἴθ' ἑνί τινι γένει χρωμένη τῶν μέτρων ἀνώνυμοι τυγχάνουσι μέχρι τοῦ νῦν· (1447a28–b2)

To create *poiêsis* for Aristotle, then, is not quite the same thing as authorship for us; he lacks a word for literature, and although he recognizes the lack as a failure of his language, he does not redress the failure by offering his own term. On the other hand, he is readily able to find a term to encompass what we would call poetry and music, identifying them both as *mimêsis*, "imitation" or "reenactment."[65] Because, in Aristotle's time, most (though not all) music would include verse, and verse, if performed, would generally include melody, the boundary

[63] On this point, see also Pratt (1993) 91–2, who likewise takes the point of the passage as being about skill in speaking.

[64] I am indebted for the examples that follow to Daniel Fried (personal communication, 27 October 2006).

[65] For the latter translation, see Nagy (1990b) 42–3.

between poetry and song, although sharper than it had been in previous centuries, was still highly permeable.[66] Poetic and musical genres, then, can be understood as united by their status as representational arts, a category that seems to exclude prose writing. The key factor, of course, that unites poetry and music, but excludes prose writing, is performance, and so Aristotle's notion of *mimêsis*, and by extension of *poiêsis*, is in a basic way oriented toward performance.

A small but revealing passage underscores the fact that *poieô* can, for Aristotle, mean unambiguously "do, perform," rather than "make, compose." When discussing possible etiologies for drama, Aristotle notes the etymological claims of the Dorians, and in particular suggests a Dorian origin for the word "drama" itself:

> And "doing, making" [the Dorians] call *drân*, but Athenians *prattein*.
>
> καὶ τὸ ποιεῖν αὐτοὶ μὲν δρᾶν, Ἀθηναίους δὲ πράττειν προσαγορεύειν. (*Poetics*, 1448b1)

The use of the verb *drân*, clearly understood as the origin of the word "drama," suggests how we should interpret *poieô* here. *Drân* is a word that may in its epichoric context simply mean "do, make," but in a Panhellenic context such as the writings of Aristotle suggests meaningful action, such as that of ritual – or drama.[67] To suggest to his readers an equivalence, then, between *poiêsis* and *drâma* suggests also that *poiêsis* is itself a kind of meaningful action – indeed, a performance – a suggestion borne out by the associations with music we have traced earlier.

Scenes of authorship in Greece thus tend to account for the circumstances of composition of a text, whereas such scenes in China, at least before the emergence of the cosmopolitan Ruist readings of our commentaries, expressed greater interest in establishing the circumstances of a particular performance.[68] Such performances were not seen as defining the composition, transmission, or original meaning

[66] On the conceptual relationship of "song" and "poetry," see Nagy (1990b) 17–21. My free alternation between "poem" and "song" when discussing the poems in the *Canon of Songs* is intended in part to remind the reader of the impossibility of distinguishing the two in the early Chinese context, as well.

[67] On *drân* and its connotations of both "ritual" and "drama," see Nagy (1990b) 387–8.

[68] The situation does change at that point, a transition to which Sima Qian's discussion of Qu Yuan is a partial witness.

of a poem; rather, they were understood as conferring legitimacy on the poem's status as a work of Panhuaxia significance and as a component of the language of communication among states. As such, scenes of authorship of the Panhuaxia era had no need to be exhaustive or definitive, but could instead open new horizons in the interpretation of an existing poem, a phenomenon we shall see in practice in Chapters 5–7.

Conclusions

Important patterns emerge from even this brief juxtaposition of the explicit treatments of poetics in early Greece and China. Familiar points of contrast, such as the Chinese conviction that poetry has the power to build and regulate a community, or the Greek understanding of poetry as *mimêsis*, reveal themselves to be not as starkly contrasting as they at first appear; even explicit statements of poetics from each culture contain elements of the other's core ideas. Further, both Greek and Chinese seem initially not to draw sharp distinctions between composition and performance; these distinctions to gradually emerge in different ways in each culture, although the fact that such distinctions *do* emerge (and that composition and performance thus come to seem like different acts) is a similarity that may outweigh the differences. The comparison of explicit poetics between early Greece and China, then, suggests as many points of convergence as of divergence, and urges upon us a comparative method that sees the two neither as equivalent nor as opposites. In the chapters that follow, I examine implicit rather than explicit poetics; a similar dynamic will apply.

2

Epic Authorship

The Lives of Homer*, Textuality, and Panhellenism*

The notionally foundational works of Greek and Chinese literature, that is to say Homeric epic and the *Canon of Songs*, differ in very obvious ways in form and content, but both feature self-effacement by the poets who created them. I discuss the somewhat different Chinese version of this in Chapter 5; here I discuss authorial self-reference in Homeric epic. The poet of the *Odyssey* inserts himself into the first line of his epic, ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα, "Narrate to me, muse," but does so in the dative case. He is not the singing subject of his poem, but rather his indirect object, an interested party to it. His singular self-reference is devoid of identity and personality, and serves in fact only to point to his invisibility. The same is true of the *Iliad*; the invocation at the beginning of the Catalogue of the Ships (ἔσπετε νῦν μοι Μοῦσαι, "Tell me now, Muse," *Iliad* 2.484) reminds the audience of the poet's presence, but evacuates that presence of any specific identity. To understand why this should be so requires a slight digression.

Whatever our personal views on the composers and compositional practices of Homeric epic,[1] few would now dispute the centrality of performance for the circulation and appreciation of this category of verbal art, and indeed one of the major projects of contemporary

[1] The introduction to Nagy (1999a) offers a strong argument for oral-traditional poetics in the Parry–Lord sense, with bibliography for other points of view. Other relevant positions on this issue can be found in (e.g.) Powell (1991), Janko (1992), and West (2001). See the previous chapter for my discussion of the same questions of orality with respect to the Chinese *Canon of Songs*.

Homeric scholarship must be to integrate the consequences of this turn to performance into our ideas about the texts we possess.[2] Most obviously, our thinking about texts must change to take account of the (unknown) music, dance, gestures, costuming, and vocal delivery that will have conveyed much of the meaning of these works of verbal art, but the impact of the turn toward performance on our understanding of the use of language must also receive due attention.

One respect in which the languages of performed and textual verbal art differ is in the treatment of indexical language, a phenomenon I discuss more fully in Chapter 5. Viewed as part of a performance, rather than as part of a written text, the *moi* of *Odyssey* 1.1 (and of *Iliad* 2.484) has, I will argue, the force of address rather than of reference; that is, it identifies the rhapsode relationally as part of a culturally bound system (i.e., as a singer gifted with the power to hear the muse), rather than as a unique individual. As such, it would take on a clearer meaning in performance, giving that performance of the poem the authority of a Muse's narration, and subsuming any given rhapsode into an impersonal epic voice. The lyric "I" is here transformed into an epic "me"; the poet can be only the indirect object of his own discourse, neither its authentic subject or speaker (always the Muse), nor its object, the matter being told (at least potentially the case with lyric poetry), but instead merely an interested party, not altogether distinct as such from his audience. The poet of epic all but effaces himself from his own text, and the lingering trace of himself serves only to point to that act of effacement, in a gesture that simultaneously asserts both the greatness of his authority and his identity with the tradition. Self-referentiality in epic conceals the poet, rather than revealing him.

The *Lives of Homer*

The fact that Homeric epic, as a genre, ignores or effaces the traces of its own authorship has, of course, implications for how one writes about the authorship of that epic. Few texts of such length offer so little fodder to the naïve biographically oriented reader. The *Lives of Homer* thus provide an excellent starting point for an investigation of the construction of authorship in Greece, not only because

[2] See esp. Bakker (2006).

of the general historical primacy given to Homer,[3] but also because the task faced by these *Lives* approaches a limit-case for what biographical readings might do. I will argue below that the real focus of these *Lives* is not the author, but the poems. The *Lives of Homer*, which are approximately twelve in number and all of which are to some extent compilations of other sources,[4] are especially useful to such a study, for several reasons. First of all, the comparative abundance and relative length of these works give us more to go on than is the case with the more scattered anecdotes concerning other Greek poets (much less the sorts of anecdotal evidence we shall find in Chinese ritual and historical texts as we move eastward in the second half of this book). To this pragmatic consideration, we may add others. As we shall see, because epic by its nature marginalizes the personal experience of its author, the "reverse biographical fallacy" offers an especially incomplete understanding of biographical accounts of epic poets.[5] Finally, Homer, in his role as the symbolic beginning of Greek (and therefore "Western") literature, and as the focal point of scholarly debates about oral-traditional poetics, represents an especially highly charged ideological field for both ancient and modern scholars, and so identifying and sorting out the implicit literary-theoretical claims about Homeric epic contained within these *Lives* might assume a greater urgency. I begin this book, therefore, with the figure that offers at once the greatest opportunities to make my case, and the highest stakes, with the hope that, the usefulness of my model established here, I will be able to apply it more effectively elsewhere. Further, by drawing attention to the ideological claims about the production, circulation, and

[3] The assumption that Greek literature "begins" with Homer was hardly taken for granted in the Greek world itself; Hesiod was sometimes thought of as an older poet, and shadowy figures such as Linus, Musaeus, and Orpheus were always (to the extent that they were present in the discussion) understood to predate Homer. Nonetheless, there is a sense in which Homer's primacy within Greek literature is taken for granted now, and was tacitly assumed in the ancient tradition as well, and it is in this sense that I speak here. See the Introduction for a discussion of the concept of "implied poetics."

[4] See the Excursus at the end of this chapter for a fuller discussion of these *Lives*.

[5] Briefly, if the biographical fallacy is the naïve practice of reading a poet's work as a guide to his or her life (and, perhaps, building an explicit biographical narrative around such reading practices), then the reverse biographical fallacy is the naïve practice of reading biographical narratives about poets as if they can be explained in terms of the biographical fallacy. See the *Introduction* for a fuller discussion.

value of epic contained within them, I hope also to continue a process, already begun, by which the *Lives* of Homer are recuperated as literary texts in their own right.[6]

Before I begin my discussion proper, an overview of the content of the *Lives* will prove useful. Only a few of the texts called *Lives of Homer* present anything like a sustained biographical narrative;[7] the rest offer expository discussions of topics related to Homeric biography (birthplace, dates, parentage, and so on) without casting that information in a narrative form. The narratives that do survive conflict on many details, and the examination of those conflicts will provide the evidence that motivates this chapter's conclusions. Nonetheless, a sequential list of the potential elements of the *Lives* provides a useful background against which the differing versions found in each *Life* will stand in sharper relief. Here, then, is a generalized *schema* of a *Life of Homer*. Elements whose phrasing includes "may" are optional elements; those without that modal qualification are fairly universal features of Homeric biography:[8]

1. There *may* be debates about Homer's origins, or the *Life may* favor one version
2. Homer's genealogy *may* be connected to Hesiod and to other past poets
3. Homer's mother's pregnancy *may* be irregular (premarital sex, rape, divine birth)

[6] In addition to Graziosi (2002), an invaluable work whose significance to my own thinking on the construction of Homer is reflected by the numerous citations below, two other notable exceptions are Compton (1990) and Pòrtulas (1996). Both are primarily interested in the influence of these biographical traditions on other literary forms. Significantly, both are also more willing to project our biographical anecdotes into the Archaic period, whereas West, in particular, who is looking for evidence about the historical author of the epics, tends to place these traditions later, arguing, for example, that Alcidamas does not base his contest between Homer and Hesiod on earlier sources (West (1967)). Gigante's edition of the *Lives* is also noteworthy for its interest in these texts as literature, and in particular on the *Certamen* and Pseudo-Herodotus as proto-novelistic works (Gigante (1996) 12).

[7] Of those that do, the most extensive by far are the *Certamen* and Pseudo-Herodotus. Proclus and Hesychius present condensed biographical narratives, whereas Pseudo-Plutarch I transmits material from three earlier sources: Ephorus of Cyme, Aristotle, and Colophonian tradition. The former two are presented in narrative form.

[8] This *schema* follows in general the pattern of Pseudo-Herodotus, the most extended of the narratives, although important elements from other lives are inserted where appropriate. No one *Life* includes all of these events, and we shall see that these omissions are generally meaningful.

4. Homer's mother *may* flee or be sent to another town
5. Homer is born, probably on the banks of the Meles, and probably therefore named Melesigenes
6. Strife *may* afflict his hometown, and he *may* have to leave
7. If not, he *may* travel on his own, learning of other lands
8. He *may* become blind, and if not the theme of his blindness will have to be addressed
9. Homer begins to compose poetry, possibly traveling to different places and composing different works there. He will almost certainly be the author of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; he *may* also be the author of minor comic works and/or of the epic cycle more generally
10. Homer *may* spend an extended period on Chios and/or on Samos
11. Homer *may* marry and have children and *may* present his son-in-law with a poem as a wedding-gift
12. Homer *may* travel to major cities, possibly altering his work to please those cities
13. Homer *may* consult the oracle at Delphi and be warned against travel to Ios
14. Homer *may* participate in musical competitions, possibly with Hesiod
15. Homer goes to Ios (possibly to see Creophylus, possibly by mistake)
16. Homer dies after failing to answer a riddle proposed by fisher boys
17. Homer is buried on Ios and has an epitaph there
18. There *may* be some account of how his work is later collected

The compulsory elements are thus few in number and basic in content. Whatever else is said, Homer is almost always born near the Meles river (i.e., in Smyrna); composes poetry, always including the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; and dies on the island of Ios after failing to answer a riddle. It is the differences among the various *Lives* as they include, omit, and adapt these elements and the other, optional, ones that provide the substance of the chapter. The chapter opens with a negative argument in favor of my strategy of reading poets' lives as implicit poetic manifestoes, namely with a demonstration of the limitations of the reverse-biographic fallacy as a model. I then examine several

moments in which the *Lives of Homer* do clearly indulge in the biographical fallacy, and demonstrate the limitations imposed by reading those moments only in those terms. I then move to the positive assertion of my case and the demonstration of the implicit poetic programs offered by or contained in the *Lives of Homer*. As I have just shown, there are many possible elements of these *Lives*, and I will not discuss all of them here. My discussion is instead organized around a series of "biographical devices," core units of biographical narrative that allowed ancient readers and writers to discuss abstract ideas about literature. These devices are numerous, but my discussion focuses around four: genealogy and birthplace, travel, transcription, and, finally, recension.[9] These four biographical devices correspond to the core elements of Homer's story, present in most of the *Lives*, and they are the textual sites at which the greatest implicit poetic activity can be found; where they are absent, that absence is often just as productive of meaning. I will argue that the biographical anecdotes about Homer that we possess use these devices to discuss the ways in which Homeric epic emerges as a Panhellenic cultural force out of a network of epichoric interests.

Biographical Fallacies

Before I make that argument, however, I will examine some of the most obvious instances of the biographical fallacy in action in the *Lives of Homer*. My claim is not the stronger (and more implausible) one that the biographical fallacy cannot be found in these texts. Rather, I will make the weaker (but, I think, convincing) claim that my model of implied poetics accounts for more of the content of the *Lives* than does the biographical fallacy, and that implied poetics will also yield a richer and more rewarding reading of them.

Of all the *Lives*, it is the pseudo-Herodotean that indulges most frequently in the biographical fallacy. I will focus my discussion on three respects in which Pseudo-Herodotus seems to read Homer's work biographically: he has Homer insert into epic narrative various of the

[9] Elsewhere Beecroft (2010). I discuss the biographical device of blindness, which I argue is a means of discussing the role of writing in the composition and circulation of Homeric epic.

people he has encountered on his journeying; he has Homer insert flattering verses about Athens into his epics in order to smooth an anticipated voyage there; and he structures the life as a whole around a series of epigrams, allegedly by Homer and that comment on events that take place in Homer's life as narrated by Pseudo-Herodotus. Each of these practices, I would argue, is in some measure a genuine example of the biographical fallacy, even though each must also be understood in other ways as well.

At various points in Homer's travels as narrated by Pseudo-Herodotus, we encounter characters with suspiciously familiar names. When at a settlement called Neon Teichos or "New Wall," he recites the first verses of his poetic career (one of the epigrams mentioned earlier) in the shop of a cobbler named Tychios (Pseudo-Herodotus 362 West). The shipowner who generously invites Homer to travel with him is named Mentes (358). The Ithacan who takes care of Homer when he falls blind on that island is named Mentor (360), and the man who marries Homer's unwed mother and undertakes Homer's education as a boy is named Phemius (356).[10] Not all of these characters are equally familiar to modern casual readers of the poem, but in any event Pseudo-Herodotus makes certain to clarify for us his intentions in introducing us to these figures in Homer's life. He explains that Homer showed his gratitude to these four men: to Tychios by making him the craftsman who built Ajax's shield, to Mentes by making him the lord of the Taphians (and a disguise adopted by Athena in her conversations with Telemachus), to Mentor by making him the man Telemachus leaves in charge of his father's estate during his own travels, and to Phemius by making him the bard of Odysseus' household (382–4).

Certainly this is precisely a naïve biographical reading of Homeric epic, and those who have interpreted it as such have done so reasonably.[11] In general, whenever we encounter a character in

[10] Note that in the report of Ephorus of Cyme's version we find in Pseudo-Plutarch I, Phemius' role is slightly different. There, Cretheis' father entrusts his daughter to his brother Maion, who then violates Cretheis and hands her over to a Smyrnaean teacher, Phemius, for marriage. As the chapter unfolds, we will see a number of ways in which the basic narrative of Homer's birth in Smyrna is altered in different sources, sometimes with evident programmatic effect, sometimes not.

[11] See, generally, Lefkowitz (1981) 12–23.

Pseudo-Herodotus with a name familiar from Homeric epic, we can assume that we will later hear an account of how Homer inserted that character into epic narrative as a reward. There are, however, two exceptions to this pattern, one relatively minor and one quite striking. It is puzzling that Pseudo-Herodotus should use the name Glaucus for the goatherd who first takes him in on his arrival on Chios (378); Glaucus is also the name of the Lycian hero, most famous for his decision not to fight Diomedes when the two discover they are in a relationship of guest-friendship (*Iliad* 6. 119–237). Although the theme of hospitality is apposite enough for Homer's encounter with the Chian goatherd, the contrast in social status between the two Glaucuses is great enough to make the comparison border on the grotesque. More to the point, Pseudo-Herodotus does not make the comparison; when our biographer enumerates those men Homer had met whom he inserted into his poetry, he ignores Glaucus. The name also recalls that of a fisherman turned sea deity, who is not mentioned by name in Homer, and who differs in birthplace (our goatherd Glaucus is from Chios; the fisherman-god is from Anthedon in Boeotia).[12] The name is common enough that its appearance both in Pseudo-Herodotus and in Homeric epic may be nothing more than coincidence. At the same time, it at least suggests that other motivations besides biographical fallacy–induced invention are at work here.

More significantly, when the now-blind Homer is in Phocaea, Pseudo-Herodotus has him be taken in by a man named Thestorides, in exchange for which Homer consents to Thestorides' transcription of two minor epic poems, the *Phocais* and the *Little Iliad*. Thestorides promptly flees, and is later heard from performing these poems as his own on the island of Chios and teaching them in a school he has set up (370–72). I will discuss this anecdote in more detail below as a revealing scene of transcription. For the moment, however, I will emphasize another feature of the story, namely that Thestorides is in fact also a Homeric name, being the patronymic of Agamemnon's seer Calchas. Of course, it would be absurd to suggest that Homer would choose to reward a man who betrayed his trust by representing him in so favorable a light in his own poem. That being the case, why does Pseudo-Herodotus mention the name Thestorides at

[12] Athenaeus, *Deipn.* 7.47.18.

all, when the expectations he has created about the appearance of Homeric characters in his own narrative are thereby thwarted? As we shall see in more detail below, this puzzling exception disappears if we read the scene between Homer and Thestorides not as an act of naïve biographical criticism, but rather as a device to discuss questions of transcription, and of the relationship of the *Phocaia* and the *Little Iliad* to the broader tradition of Homeric epic. We know from other sources that the attribution at least of the *Little Iliad* was taken seriously by some;[13] as such we can see that Pseudo-Herodotus' mention of Thestorides has more to do with the authorship of the *Little Iliad* than with the prophet Calchas.

We might also note an inversion of this phenomenon, a situation where Pseudo-Herodotus misses an opportunity to incorporate known figures into his narrative. The geographers Pausanias and Strabo, respectively, inform us of the existence of an early King Hector of Chios (Pausanias 7.4.9) and King Agamemnon of Cyme (Strabo 13.1.3). The coincidence of these names in locations tied to Homeric biography (and in a historical period at least not inconsistent with traditional dates for Homer) has led at least one modern scholar to suggest that these kings were in some sense inspirations for the composition of the *Iliad*.[14] Certainly, they would represent a lost opportunity for naïve biographical criticism within the *Lives of Homer* tradition, even if that tradition tends in general to avoid named historical figures and even if the suggestion that two of the leading heroes of the *Iliad* were Homeric interpolations might be rather more troubling than, say, the interpolation of a shoemaker or a sea-captain into the existing narrative. At any event, because Pseudo-Herodotus misses opportunities both to depict his own characters as interpolated into Homeric epic, and to interpolate into his own narrative characters known to have been available to him, we are left with the conclusion that these interpolations can be explained at most partially in terms of naïve biographical criticism.

Tensions between Panhellenic and epichoric motivations account, I would argue, for Pseudo-Herodotus' discussion of the presence of a

[13] E.g., Scholia in Euripidem (scholia vetera), sch Tr 822.3.

[14] Janko (1992) 38; see Graziosi (2002) 253 for a critique of Janko's claim, which does, however, suggest that these kings may have played some role in some earlier, unknown biographical tradition of Homer.

small number of pro-Athenian verses (*Iliad* 2.547–58; *Odyssey* 7.80–81) in an epic tradition in which Athens is otherwise a marginal player. According to Pseudo-Herodotus, Homer added these verses to his (already existing) poems only as he prepared to travel to Athens to perform them (386). One could argue for a biographically motivated reading here; the claim made by the *Life* might be that these lines must be understood in terms not of the forward movement of the plot, but of the events of Homer's own life. Another reading is again possible. The legitimacy of these lines was a subject for debate in the ancient world, rendered suspect because of their convenience for Athenian political and cultural claims. To narrativize the presence of these lines as he does confers legitimacy on them (they are in fact by Homer), although at the same time acknowledging their secondariness (they are not part of the epics as originally composed). Later I will discuss the representation of the Peisistratid recension in the *Lives*, that is, the representation of the claim that Homeric epic achieved its final form thanks to the efforts of the Peisistratid family of Athenian tyrants in the second half of the sixth century BC. I argue that Pseudo-Herodotus, reflecting the biases of the Homeridae (a school of rhapsodes claiming a direct lineage from Homer), rejects the claims of the Peisistratid recension. In this context, Pseudo-Herodotus' account of the pro-Athenian verses assumes further significance: the Peisistratids being naturally associated with the rewriting of epic in favor of Athens,[15] an account in which this rewriting happens at the hands of Homer himself locates authority over the text, not in the Peisistratid recension but in a Homer to whom the Homeridae have unique access. More broadly, the episode suggests a means by which Panhellenic epic can be accommodated to epichoric demands.[16]

In the case of these three issues – the appearance of Homeric characters in the *Life*, the voyage to Ithaca, and the insertion of

[15] Graziosi (2002) 220–27.

[16] We see a similar phenomenon at work, for example, in the two versions of Epigram 13 we find: one (in Pseudo-Herodotus) suited to an oligarchic Samos; the other (in the *Certamen*) somewhat anachronistically suited to a democratic Athens. See also the *Certamen*'s discussion of Homer's visit to Argos, in which he performs verses celebratory of that city. Such narratives can function simultaneously as polemics about texts and as models for the rhapsodic capacity to adapt Panhellenic material to epichoric demands.

pro-Athenian verses, the difference between a reading based on the reverse biographical fallacy and one based on implied poetics is of course at least in part a question of emphasis. The relationship between author and text has many of the same features in both cases, but where the reverse biographical fallacy believes that the text is being used to account for the author's life, implied poetics claims that the *Life* is being used to ground a reading of the text. When it comes to the epigrams that Pseudo-Herodotus attributes to Homer, we are on rather different ground. These sixteen epigrams would seem to provide the most fertile ground for biographical criticism, in that they, unlike Homeric epic, are frequently about everyday life.[17] In other respects, however, they prove a meager and problematic basis on which to construct a biography. To begin with, most of them are found only in Pseudo-Herodotus or in the portion of the *Suda* entry on Homer that is taken from Pseudo-Herodotus; two are additionally found in the *Certamen*. One of these two, an epitaph for Midas, appears elsewhere attributed to other poets.[18] It is thus impossible to tell whether the *Vita* was constructed as a gloss on the epigrams, or the epigrams as an ornament to the *Vita*, or whether (as the greater number of scholars seem to think) neither had an independent existence without the other.[19] Further, although these epigrams fit the details of Homer's life as found in Pseudo-Herodotus, they do not fit any of

[17] Lefkowitz (1981) 22. For a full discussion of these epigrams see Markwald (1986).

[18] See Markwald (1986) 34–83. Plato *Phaedrus* 264d represents the epitaph for Midas as anonymous; Diogenes Laertius I 89 and *Anth Pal* VII 153 represent it as by Cleobulus of Lindos, the sixth century BC tyrant of Rhodes and one of the people generally included among the Seven Wise Men. See Chapter 4 below for a discussion of Plato's interest in Homer in the *Phaedrus* generally; given this, his silence on the attribution of this epigram strongly suggests either Plato's ignorance of this attribution, or his rejection of it. Furthermore, Simonides of Ceos (581 Page) attributes the poem to Cleobulus as well. Under these circumstances, there can be nothing simple about a reverse biographical reading of Pseudo-Herodotus' attribution of the Midas epitaph to Homer. Gigante (1996) 33 notes that Pseudo-Herodotus reports the claim of Homeric authorship of the Midas epitaph as a Cymean tradition and connects that tradition to claims that Midas' wife also came from Cyme. I will say more about Cyme (the only city to lay claim to both Homer and Hesiod) later; for the moment I will simply suggest that the debate over the attribution of the Midas epitaph is certainly connected to the claims of epichoric traditions.

[19] Such is the view taken by Markwald (1986) 16–18. Gigante (1996) 12, drawing on Wilamowitz, discusses this mixing of verse and prose as indicative of an "ancient popular book."

the other *Lives*, and none of them incorporate any of the key stories common to the *Lives*, such as the death of Homer. These epigrams can explain at most Pseudo-Herodotus' *Life*, and not the remainder of the tradition.

Biographical Devices

This brief survey will, I hope, have demonstrated the limited explanatory power of the reverse biographical fallacy model when compared with that of the implied poetics model. Each of the three instances of the biographical fallacy that I have identified in Pseudo-Herodotus can be better read in terms of the claims that that instance makes regarding the production, distribution, and value of Homeric epic, rather than in terms of how that epic is used to construct a biographical account of Homer. Moreover, each of these three instances can be accommodated within the "biographical devices" I outlined above. In what follows, I offer a brief outline of the kind of work done by each of these devices and then amplify each of these discussions with readings of the *Lives*. The overarching theory under which I am working is, of course, that biographical accounts of poets function as implicit literary theory, and that each of these devices can be deployed to fulfill specific theoretical tasks.

Birthplace and Genealogy

I group questions of birthplace and genealogy together because, although they address different theoretical questions, they are inextricably tied to each other – a given claim about Homer's birthplace often implies a claim about his parentage, and *vice versa*. Claims about Homer's birthplace represent a means for managing Panhellenic and epichoric tensions, granting one community or another the honor of being Homer's birthplace, and thus in principle privileged access to Homeric epic. Genealogies, I will argue, function as narrativized genre theory, linking Homeric and Hesiodic poetry (for example) and tracing the relationships among the various poems of the Epic Cycle.[20] As

[20] That is, the other epic poems whose narratives precede, intervene between, and follow the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. In their conventional sequence, they are the *Cypria*

before, I am not suggesting that the implied poetics at work here is allegorical, that literary critics coyly expressed their thoughts on genre relations in coded form. Rather, my point is that unspoken assumptions about genre relations seem to have taken form in genealogical discussions, and that a culture that wished to make sense of the array of poetry it valued found these genealogies productive.

It may seem that claims about Homer's birthplace serve a straightforwardly epichoric agenda, fostering the civic pride and cultural prestige of a community by representing it as the point of origin for the epic tradition. In practice, matters are rarely that simple. Those *Lives* that discuss the composition of Homeric epic in narrative form tend not to locate that composition in Homer's place of birth. Furthermore, most accounts of Homer's birth involve a movement from the place of conception to the site of his actual birth. Pseudo-Herodotus, for example, who likely derives his account from the fourth-century historian Ephorus of Cyme and his *Treatise on My Country* (*Epichôrios Logos*),[21] has Homer's mother Cretheis become (illicitly) pregnant in her hometown of Cyme but give birth to her son on the banks of the Meles river in Smyrna after being dispatched to that (then-new) Cymean colony in a hastily arranged marriage to a family friend Ismenias (354 West). Pseudo-Plutarch I presents two accounts: the first, which he attributes explicitly to Ephorus of Cyme, closely tracks Pseudo-Herodotus, except that here Cretheis is impregnated by her uncle Maion, and then sent to Smyrna in marriage to Phemius (404).[22] The second account, reported from Aristotle, makes Cretheis a country girl from Ios who is impregnated by a *daimôn* who dances with the Muses. She escapes from Ios to Aegina, only to be kidnapped by pirates and given to Maion, who in this version is the king of Lydia, ruling in Smyrna (406). These three narratives, all of which are likely

(which deals with the causes of the Trojan War and its events up to the action of the *Iliad*), the *Iliad* itself, the *Little Iliad* and the *Sack of Troy* (or *Iliou Persis*) (these two cover the remainder of the Trojan War), the *Nostoi* (the *Returns* of the heroes other than Odysseus), the *Odyssey*, and the *Telegonia* (which covered the final years of Odysseus). West (2003) provides the relevant source materials, with English translation.

[21] Gigante (1996) 26. On Ephorus generally, see Pownall (2004).

[22] Intriguingly, Phemius (the name of Odysseus' household bard in the *Odyssey*) and Maion are names that recur in these stories, attached to different characters who fulfill different roles.

to be of pre-Hellenistic origin,[23] are all marked by featuring a problematic pregnancy elsewhere, followed by a removal to Smyrna, where Homer is born. Ephorus' work, avowedly *epichôrios*, certainly reflects local Cymean tradition; the account in Aristotle seems likely to be from Ios. Many other birthplaces are suggested in our sources (including fanciful possibilities such as Rome and Egypt), but in most of these cases possible birthplaces come in lists, rather than as authoritative pronouncements, and in none of these other cases is a possible birthplace embedded within its own narrative. Moreover, of all the *Lives*, only the relatively brief Pseudo-Plutarch II and *Vita Scorialensis* II do not claim that Homer was originally named Melesigenes ("Son of Meles" or "Born at the Meles," depending on the treatment given in our sources),[24] and at that, *Vita Scorialensis* II mentions the claim that Meles was Homer's father. Birth at Smyrna thus seems to be a relatively stable element of the earliest layers of Homeric biography, generally accompanied by a claim that his mother became pregnant elsewhere and fled to Smyrna.

One of the possible appeals such a narrative might have held for later Greek readers of Homer lies in the historical and linguistic status of Smyrna itself. As Herodotus tells us (1.149.5), the first Greeks to settle in the (already ancient) settlement of Smyrna were Aeolic speakers from Cyme and elsewhere, but the city was quickly taken over by Ionians, especially from Colophon (one of the other claimants of the status of Homer's birthplace, as we see, e.g., in Pseudo-Plutarch I's list of possibilities, where, significantly, he relies on the inscription from a

[23] On Pseudo-Herodotus, see, for example, West (2003) 304, where it is argued that, because the epigrams are almost certainly from the sixth or fifth century on linguistic grounds, the narrative in which they are embedded and which they require must be of approximately the same date. Ephorus of Cyme and Aristotle are both fourth-century figures, each clearly drawing on existing traditions.

[24] From the point of view of historical linguistics, a more plausible etymology would be "He who cares for his offspring" (Marx (1925) 406–8, *apud* Graziosi (2002) 75). Graziosi offers a persuasive reading of this etymology in terms of the tradition of the Homeridae; still, we must bear in mind that the *Lives* universally understand the name as meaning "Son of Meles" or "born at the Meles River," just as indeed none of them offers a narrative in which Homer is born anywhere except on the banks of the Meles, in Smyrna. Folk etymologies such as this frequently have reality effects more powerful than the truths of actual etymologies, and the fact that Melesigenes is *never* glossed in the tradition as "He who cares for his offspring," and *always* associated with Smyrna, is itself an important fact.

Hellenistic-era statue for evidence (410)). The accounts of Cretheis' migration to Smyrna, then, insert her neatly into an existing narrative of Asia Minor's history, whether she is an Aeolian from Cyme or an Ionian from Ios.[25] The disputes about Cretheis' own birthplace allow for rival claims about Homer's dialectal affiliation, whereas his upbringing in Smyrna (a site both geographically close to the Ionian-Aeolic frontier and, in the times our *Lives* discuss, at a chronological division in its own dialectal affiliation) prevents either dialectal grouping from claiming Homer altogether for their own. Indeed, Smyrna's linguistic status as a city with an Ionian present and an Aeolic past mirrors nicely the often-observed linguistic structure of Homeric epic, which likewise has surface Ionian features over deeper Aeolic traces.[26]

Finally, and even more importantly, Smyrna was sacked by the Lydians around 600 BC, and then again and more devastatingly by the Persians around 545 BC. The city remained trivial in size until it was largely rebuilt shortly after the death of Alexander the Great (Strabo 14.1.37; Strabo describes the Smyrnaeans of the intervening years as "living in villages" οἰκουμένη κωμηδόν). Its almost total obscurity during the Classical period, I would argue, made it an ideal nonplace for Homer's birth, a location that all could accept because it belonged to none. Homer being made a native of Smyrna, no individual *polis* of any standing could lay claim to him (and thus to Homeric epic) as their own, and the question of his birthplace could be resolved without contemporary political implications. In other words, these stories about Homer's birthplace provide him with epichoric origins, rooting him to an identifiable and plausible context, while at the same time making him an ideally Panhellenic figure. The epichoric glory due to any one *polis* is thus deflected to the site of Homer's conception; we have at least two clear examples of *poleis* whose local traditions make

[25] To be sure, this latter claim (from Aristotle) has the effect of pushing Homer's dates significantly forward. The Lydian conquest of Smyrna is usually dated to c. 610–600 BC, a date that sits oddly with the Aristotelian narrative's earlier situating of its plot at the time of the Ionian invasions, that is, roughly 140 years after the fall of Troy in traditional Greek dating schemes. As I will show in Chapter 3, however, inconsistencies in dating for poets' lives often have more to do with the desire to satisfy competing ideological agendas (such as wanting Homer both to be Smyrnaean and to have lived at the time of the Ionian invasions) than with a passion for historical accuracy.

[26] On this point, see Horrocks (1997) 212.

such claims. The work done by these early *Lives*, in making Homer Smrynaean, thus mirrors the work done by Homeric epic itself, in reconciling conflicting epichoric traditions to create a unified Panhellenic culture. Our sources are limited, and certainly other stories may have circulated in Classical times, but, I would argue, Smyrna's peculiar status is responsible for its favored position among the contenders for the title of Homer's birthplace.

Once Smyrna is revitalized in the Hellenistic era, it grows rapidly in importance, quickly becoming one of the great cities of Asia Minor, a status it continues to hold throughout ancient history (and indeed to this day). Under such conditions, its own epichoric claims to the birth of Homer were perhaps less easy for other communities to accept. A shift seems to occur in later accounts of Homer's life. These *Lives*, which do not generally offer a coherent narrative of Homer's birth, tend to present instead a range of opinions concerning Homer's birthplace, or otherwise emphasize that the account they are presenting has a particular source and that other sources exist. Not coincidentally, these *Lives* all clearly date from the Hellenistic era or later, even though they equally obviously report much earlier material. The frame narrative of the *Certamen* (clearly no earlier than the second century AD, despite the earlier date of the core story) takes such a stance, presenting the claims of Smyrna, Chios, and Colophon, before concluding with a Delphic oracle said to date from the time of Hadrian in which it is claimed that Homer's true birthplace is Ithaca, and his parents Telemachus, son of Odysseus, and Polycaste, the daughter of Nestor who bathes Telemachus at *Odyssey* 3.464. Pseudo-Plutarch I, likewise, presents three claims (the two we have discussed and a Colophonian claim), whereas Pseudo-Plutarch II offers seven possible birthplaces, with sources for each, and the *Vita Romana* offers nine possibilities. Hesychius takes this approach to an extreme, suggesting no fewer than twenty possibilities. In the case of these last three *Lives*, it seems clear that their motivation is primarily to offer as comprehensive a presentation of the evidence as possible, without presenting their own conclusions.[27]

[27] Graziosi (2002) 85 and Nagy (1990) 78 develop this point in some detail. As I have shown, the debate over which city can claim to be Homer's birthplace takes a rather different form than is often assumed, with a variety of narratives about his mother's

That such an approach can have its own ideological import is suggested by Proclus' verdict on Homer's birthplace:

It is not easy to prove of what ancestry or from which homeland Homer came, because he neither says anything about it himself, nor do those who speak about him agree. Rather, because his poetry reveals nothing about these matters explicitly, each writer has quite fearlessly indulged himself as he wished. Accordingly, some have claimed that he was a Colophonian, some a Chian, some a Smyrnaean, some an Ietan, some a Cymean, and overall every city lays claim to him, such that one might plausibly say that he was a citizen of the world (*kosmopolitês*).

Ὅμηρος μὲν οὖν τίνων γονέων ἢ ποίας ἐγένετο πατρίδος οὐ ῥᾴδιον ἀποφήνασθαι· οὔτε γὰρ αὐτός τι λελάληκεν, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ οἱ περὶ αὐτοῦ εἰπόντες συμπεφωνήκασιν, ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῦ μηδὲν ῥητῶς ἐμφαίνειν περὶ τούτων τὴν ποίησιν αὐτοῦ μετὰ πολλῆς ἀδείας ἕκαστος οἷς ἐβούλετο ἐχαρίσατο. καὶ διὰ τοῦτο οἱ μὲν Κολοφώνιον αὐτὸν ἀνηγόρευσαν, οἱ δὲ Χῖον, οἱ δὲ Σμυρναῖον, οἱ δὲ Ἰήτην, ἄλλοι δὲ Κυμαῖον, καὶ καθόλου πᾶσα πόλις ἀντιποιεῖται τἀνδρός, ὅθεν εἰκότως ἂν κοσμοπολίτης λέγοιτο. (418 West)

In other words, the discussion of Homer's birthplace in terms of a multiplicity of conflicting claims that ultimately cancel each other out can be understood is an attempt to Panhellenize, not merely Homeric epic, but also access to that epic.[28] The claim that Homer is a *kosmopolitês*, a cosmopolitan, or citizen of the world, is in this sense a claim that no *polis* has privileged access to Homeric epic. The term *kosmopolitês* is in fact rather unusual in Greek texts; the only two other men to be so characterized in any extant work are Moses and Diogenes the Cynic (who uses the word of himself). Its use to characterize Homer is therefore all the more striking.[29] When Smyrna was no longer available as a Panhellenic nonplace in which to localize Homer's birth, his birthplace became, literally, everywhere and nowhere, an ideally cosmopolitan solution.

unconventional pregnancy elsewhere always (in the narratives which survive) tied to a birth in Smyrna. This fact leads me to adopt the modified version of Graziosi's and Nagy's views developed below.

[28] Graziosi (2002) 84–6 develops this point, with reference to numismatic evidence as well as to the Proclus passage.

[29] For Moses see, for example, Philo *De confusione linguarum* 106.3; for Diogenes see Diogenes Laertius 6.63.

A similar claim is made in an epigram by Antipater of Thessalonica (fl. BC 15), and reported to us by Pseudo-Plutarch I:

> Some say that Colophon was your nurse, Homer,
> Others beautiful Smyrna, and other say Chios,
> And others Ios, and others boast that it was fortunate Salamis.
> And then again others say Thessaly, mother of the Lapiths,
> And others proclaim other foster-mothers.[30] If I may speak openly
> what Phoebus wisely prophesied,
> The great heavens were your father, because you were born
> Not of a mortal mother, but Calliope.
>
> Οἱ μὲν σεῦ Κολοφῶνα τιθηνήτειραν, Ὅμηρε,
> οἱ δὲ καλὰν Σμύρναν, οἱ δ' ἐνέπουσι Χίον,
> οἱ δ' Ἴον, οἱ δ' ἐβόασαν ἐύκλαρον Σαλαμῖνα,
> οἱ δέ νυ τῶν Λαπιθέων ματέρα Θεσσαλίαν·
> ἄλλοι δ' ἄλλην μαῖαν ἀνίαχον. εἰ δέ με Φοίβου
> χρὴ λέξαι πινυτὰς ἀμφαδὰ μαντοσύνας,
> πάτρα σοι τελέθει μέγας οὐρανός, ἐκ δὲ τεκούσης
> οὐ θνατᾶς, ματρὸς δ' ἔπλεο Καλλιόπας. (412 West = A.P. 16.296)

This epigram may have been taken seriously as a claim of maternity in later sources; at any rate, Hesychius and the *Vita Scorialensis I* report descent from Calliope among the possibilities they list (426, 440 West). Read less naïvely, the epigram, like Proclus' statement above, is making the explicit claim that Homer may be claimed as Panhellenic precisely because so many cities claim him for their own. The best way of responding to so many epichoric claims, in other words, is not to choose one over another, but rather to subsume them all in an allegorical claim with cosmopolitan aspirations. Cosmopolitan readings of Homer seem to demand a cosmopolitan Homer.

The epichoric traditions that our *Lives* report seem, paradoxically, to agree in placing Homer's actual birth in Smyrna, preferring instead to debate the location of Homer's conception. The famous dispute about his birthplace is in fact found more clearly in the lists of the authors of some of the *Lives* and in the epigram by Antipater. I argue, therefore, for a transition from older to more recent versions of the

[30] Both *tithênêteira* in the first line and *maia* here, interestingly, suggest nurses or foster mothers, as well as literal mothers; possibly Antipater is reminding us of the complex nature of the claims about Homer's birthplace, most of which make Smyrna his foster motherland.

Panhellenic origins of Homer; earlier materials seem to agree that, although Homer's parents may well have come from other places, the poet himself was born on the banks of the Meles. Later sources, perhaps reinterpreting these varying epichoric traditions as laying claim to Homer's actual birthplace, transfer their Panhellenic energies to cataloging possible birthplaces, only to suggest that all such claims are suspect, and that Homer is instead some sort of protocosmopolite, the man who is from everywhere because he is from nowhere.[31] In both cases, the impulse seems clearly to acknowledge epichoric claims while subsuming them to a Panhellenic narrative; the change in form undergone by that narrative may well have to do with the reemergence of Smyrna as a major city in the late fourth century BC.[32]

The claims of genealogy, although linked narratively to the claims about birthplaces, act in a different ideological arena. Under this heading the two main topics for debate are Homer's relationship with Hesiod and Homer's relationship with the poets of the Epic Cycle, the (now lost) portions of the epic tradition dealing with the events of the Trojan War and the returns of the heroes not covered by the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. I will argue that genealogical claims function as claims about genre theory, that a filiation of poets represents in narrative form a filiation of genres, and also as a means of representing the process of textual transmission from past to present. Homer and Hesiod are variously represented in our *Lives* as some variety of cousins, whether of the same generation or not, and as competitors, or the relationship between them can be passed over in silence or denied outright. All of these variations, I argue, represent different means of relating the heroic and didactic forms of epic, assigning different priorities to the two genres and configuring their relationships in different ways. Homer's descendants, on the other hand, are usually represented

[31] On this point see Nagy (1990b) 78 and Graziosi (2002) 85–6.

[32] Here my interpretation disagrees somewhat with that offered by Graziosi (2002) 75–6. Graziosi argues that Pseudo-Herodotus, for her the "most patriotic" of the *Lives*, must postdate the reestablishment of Smyrna in the third century, although she believes the genealogical connection between Homer and Smyrna must predate the fall of Smyrna in the sixth century. I do not dispute Graziosi's datings; rather, I would argue, based on the fact that all of the narrated versions of Homer's origins locate his actual birth in Smyrna, and that all of them also locate his conception elsewhere, that Pseudo-Herodotus' version of events need not be viewed as particularly "patriotic" (i.e., in my terms, epichoric). Note also that Pseudo-Herodotus locates most of the major events of Homer's life (marriage, children, the composition of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and the establishment of a school for epic) on Chios, not in Smyrna.

either as the authors (or recipients) of the Epic Cycle or as founders of rhapsodic traditions; the genealogical link respectively subordinates the Cycle to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* or legitimates a particular school of rhapsodes.

The genealogy that links Homer and Hesiod can be presented in a variety of ways. All of those who assert this genealogy assume that Hesiod is the son of a man named Dios. Homer is usually a descendant of a brother of Dios, although the details vary in each case. Ephorus of Cyme (according to Pseudo-Plutarch I) claims that Homer is Dios' nephew, through a brother of Dios (Maion) who then had illicit intercourse with the daughter (Critheis) of another brother (Apelles), making Homer and Hesiod at once first cousins once removed and first cousins. Proclus reports skeptically the version given by three fifth century BC historians[33] in which Homer and Hesiod are simply first cousins, with Dios and Homer's father (Maion) both sons of Apellis. The manuscript reading in the *Certamen* claims that Homer is the great-grandson of Perses (Hesiod's brother, known to us from the *Works and Days*), via that man's son Maion and his unnamed daughter, who has intercourse with the river Meles; the nineteenth-century philologist Karl Sittl suggested the reading "Apellaios" for the manuscript "Perses." If the manuscript reading is correct, Homer is Hesiod's great-great-nephew; on Sittl's reading, Homer would be Hesiod's cousin twice removed. Discussion of this genealogy can optionally trace the ancestors of both Homer and Hesiod back to earlier poets, usually including Linus and Orpheus, through a variable number of intervening generations.[34] Alternatively, some or all of this genealogy can be presented without mentioning the link to Hesiod; Pseudo-Herodotus' version represents Homer as the son of Cretheis and the grandson of Melanopus, drawing on the same stock of characters as these genealogies while removing all traces of Hesiod.[35]

[33] Hellanicus of Lesbos, Damastes of Sigeum, and Pherecydes of Leros.

[34] Debates about the actual number of generations between these poets have mostly to do, I would suggest, with the question of when Homer lived in relation to the Trojan War; the obscure collections of names cluttering these genealogies thus represent an attempt to quantify the gap between the *spatium mythicum* of Trojan myth and the *spatium (quasi-) historicum* of Homer's own life.

[35] Hesychius similarly tells us that Charax of Pergamon (second century AD?) reports a particularly elaborate version of this genealogy from Linus through several generations to Orpheus and thence gradually to Melanopus, Apelles, Maion, and Homer, but at no point suggests a Hesiodic connection.

These complex genealogies, which reuse the same (or nearly the same) names in different familial configurations, have attracted skepticism since at least the time of Proclus and cannot be taken seriously as history. I would argue, however, that they do have something to say about genre theory. To claim an equality of age and generation between Homer and Hesiod is to place their genres, heroic and didactic epic, on an equal footing; to make Hesiod of an older generation is to suggest both the primacy of Hesiodic poetry and that Homeric epic represents in some form an evolution from the Hesiodic.[36] This point has been discussed thoroughly by others;[37] the epichoric significance of this genealogy remains less explored. Hesiod's connection with Cyme is strong, given that, at *Works and Days* 632–40, he states that his father was from Cyme and moved as an adult to Ascra in Boeotia, where Hesiod was born. To claim Homer as a junior relative of Hesiod's, then, gives Cyme a genealogical link to both of the great epic poets of the Archaic period. Some versions of this genealogy also link Cyme to shadowy poet-figures of higher antiquity such as Linus and Orpheus, giving the city an undisputed claim to being a center of early Greek poetry. The Cymean claim is not that Homeric and Hesiodic poetry were themselves composed at Cyme; if Pseudo-Plutarch I's material from Ephorus of Cyme reflects local tradition, that city accepted the general claim that, whatever his city of origin, Homer was born at Smyrna. Rather, the city seems to be claiming (through the network of genealogical and generic links among archaic and mythical poets it promoted) some sort of central position within the development of the poetic tradition, even though it lays direct claim to no one part of that tradition.

The poetic competition between the two poets represented in the *Certamen* is of course another way of representing generic relations in biographical form, one that must (and does) reject genealogies where Homer and Hesiod are of different generations. Readers have often been puzzled by the fact that Hesiod wins the contest; Homer seems to be winning up until the very end of the competition, and "all the Greeks" (*hoi men Hellênes pantes* (336 West), reinforcing perhaps the

[36] The chronological relationship between these two poets is important for modern scholars as well; after she announces (Lefkowitz (1981) x) that she will consider her poets in chronological order, Lefkowitz places her Hesiod chapter before her Homer chapter, without discussion.

[37] Graziosi (2002) 167–84.

Panhellenic appeal of Homeric epic) clamor for him to be awarded victory. At this point Panedes, brother of the late Amphidamas (whose funeral games provide the context for the contest), asks each of the poets to recite their best verses; Hesiod is then judged the winner, because his verses deal with matters of peace, whereas Homer's deal with war.

The *Certamen* thus uses competition rather than genealogy to mediate the relationship between didactic and heroic epic. Where the genealogies mostly give Hesiodic epic chronological (and therefore ontological) priority over Homeric epic, the structure of the *Certamen* allows for a more complex relationship. The demand by "all the Greeks" that Homer be recognized as victor grants primacy to Homeric epic in terms of aesthetics and popular appeal; Panedes' ultimate ruling in favor of Hesiod gives that poet the stronger ethical claim. Further, the fact that the ethical wins out over the aesthetic is significant in itself. The *Certamen* story as we know it is likely derived from Alcidamas,[38] a fourth century BC rhetorician whose own belief in the importance of extemporaneous rhetorical powers no doubt explains his interest in the idea of a contest of poetic improvisation between Homer and Hesiod. As a contemporary of Socrates and Plato, likely referred to in the *Phaedrus*,[39] it is natural that Alcidamas should share his time's fascination with the tension between aesthetic and ethical appreciation of literature. The story of the *Certamen*, then, offers an opportunity to represent this debate in narrative form, projecting it into a specific epichoric context and representing it in biographical terms. Questions of the value of literature (as opposed to the conditions of its production and circulation) rarely form an important part of the implied poetics surrounding Homer; here is a clear and important exception.

Various kinds of denials and silences concerning the relationship between Homer and Hesiod also seem significant. Proclus emphatically denies the genealogical link, and in the process denies the

[38] Gigante (1996) 40. West (1967) and Richardson (1981) are in agreement on this point, although they disagree substantially on whether (as West believes) the *Certamen* story was invented by Alcidamas or (as Richardson argues) he adapts and alters an existing narrative to suit his own purposes. In either case the narrative as we know it was in all likelihood substantially shaped by Alcidamas.

[39] See Dusanic (1992) and Tomin (1992).

generic link as well, suggesting an awareness of the possible connections between the two (422 West). The Pseudo-Herodotean *Life*, which offers the Cymean genealogy of Homer without mentioning Hesiod (there or anywhere else) and similarly omits any discussion of the contest with Hesiod, seems suggestively to downplay the relationship between the two poets and thus their genres. When the Cymeans decide not to award Homer a public salary, Homer first composes an epigram, hostile to Cyme and favorable to Smyrna, and then curses Cyme, saying that it would never become famous for any poet born on its soil (370 West). In the notes to his translation of the *Lives*, Martin West rightly suggests that some reference to Hesiod is implied, although his name is pointedly not mentioned, and West further suggests that the point is that Hesiod can only become a great poet if his father migrates from Cyme to Ascra in Boeotia, as *Works and Days* 632–40 informs us he did. Beyond this point, I would also note that the curse, with Hesiod as its obvious target, deftly inserts a claim that Homer was of an older generation than Hesiod without mentioning Hesiod's name. The priority of Homeric epic over Hesiodic epic is thereby asserted, without even giving Hesiodic epic the equivalence provided by juxtaposition or competition.

Discussions of Homer's descendants tend to focus on the question of who might be the legitimate inheritors of his poetic legacy. Proclus tells us that Homer presented a minor epic, the *Capture of Oechalia*, to Creophylus (420 West); other sources, such as the Byzantine dictionary the *Suda*, suggest that Creophylus may have been Homer's son-in-law (*Suda* κ 2376).[40] Similarly, Aelian tells us that Homer presented the *Cypria* in place of a dowry to his son-in-law Stasinus of Cyprus (Aelian, *VH* 9.15).[41] Pseudo-Herodotus mentions specifically that Homer has two daughters, but claims that one of Homer's daughters died unwed and that the other married a Chian (382 West). As such he obviously precludes the possibility that Stasinus of Cyprus was Homer's son-in-law.[42] The mention of a Chian son-in-law opens

[40] Elsewhere, we find the claim that it was actually the *Iliad* that Creophylus received; *Sch. Plat*, *Resp.* 600b bis 1. See Graziosi (2002) 191 for a critique of this claim, which is, however, very much of its type.

[41] See Graziosi (2002) 186–92 for a general discussion of these two epic-as-dowry narratives.

[42] Below, under *Travel*, I will discuss in more detail the relationship between Homer and the Epic Cycle as represented by Pseudo-Herodotus.

the possibility that the Homeridae are to be understood as the biological descendants of Homer (or at least that some of them are); a greater emphasis seems, however, to be laid on Homer's foundation of a school to teach his epics on Chios.[43] If the possibility of legitimation by genealogical transmission for Homeric epic is raised by Pseudo-Herodotus, it is only to juxtapose that possibility with legitimation through pedagogical transmission. The two are thus seen as in some measure equivalent, with perhaps the greater emphasis on pedagogy.

Hesychius is the only other of our *Lives* to mention Homer's children: he claims that Homer had two sons (Eriphon and Theolaus) and a daughter by his wife Arsiphone. Hesychius also tells us that the daughter married Stasinus of Cyprus (428 West). Though Hesychius does not mention the *Cypria* as such, and indeed refers to Stasinus as the ruler (*hupatos*) of Cyprus, Stasinus' name is nonetheless sufficiently familiar in this context to suggest at least that Hesychius' source claimed some version of the *Cypria*-as-dowry story.

These accounts of Homer's descendants can serve two distinct functions. One, which I have focused on here, uses Homer's descendants as a representation of the relationship of minor epics to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. In other words, they represent in biographical narrative the debate that, in modern times, is described as that between Unitarians and Analysts, between those who attribute the entire Epic Cycle to Homer and those who attribute only the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, or sometimes only one of those two, to him. The other function served by accounts of Homer's descendants, which we will examine later, is to legitimate or frustrate the claims of particular schools of rhapsodes.

Travel

Several of our *Lives*, notably those by Pseudo-Herodotus and Proclus, claim that the author of Homeric epic must have traveled extensively in order to have composed so many detailed descriptions of so many places. In this context it is curious that neither of these *Lives* deals at much length with this early, fact-finding stage of Homer's

[43] I would suggest that this is the necessary context in which to understand the Pindaric scholion that informs us of the Syracusan claim to Homeric epic *via* Cynaethus (see below under recension).

travels. Proclus merely asserts that they must have taken place, and Pseudo-Herodotus' narrative is curiously evasive as to its details. He describes Homer as having traveled as far as Etruria and Spain (neither of which features explicitly in Homeric epic), and then stopping at Ithaca on the homeward journey, making other unnamed stops before finally becoming fully blind at Colophon (360 West). Pseudo-Herodotus' curious silence on Homer's other stops, and the possibility that they coincided with locations mentioned in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, is a missed opportunity for naïve biographical criticism. Ithaca is a lone example, where one might have hoped for more: a visit to Pylos or Sparta, for example, to Mycenae or, indeed, to the site of Troy itself.

Pseudo-Herodotus places a much greater emphasis on the travels Homer takes once blind, and a poet. These travels serve more to account for the distribution of texts than for the poet's role in crafting them. Pseudo-Herodotus' Homer makes many stops on his blind wanderings (360–98 West):

1. Smyrna	Homer "becomes a poet"[44]
2. Neon Teichos	Homer composes his first verses, including Epigrams 1 and 2, *Amphiaraus' Expedition to Thebes,*[45] and the *Homeric Hymns*
3. Cyme	Epigrams 3 (the epitaph for Midas) and 4; he acquires the name of Homer
4. Phocaea	*Little Iliad, Phocais* Epigram 5
5. Erythrae	Epigrams 6–9
6. Chios	Epigrams 10, 11, teaches children of Glaucus' master, composes the *paignia* ("fun poems" such as the *Battle of the Frogs and Mice*)
	Moves to the main city; opens a school to teach his poems, marries, has children, composes *Iliad* and *Odyssey*
7. Samos	Detour on route to Athens, Epigrams 12–15
8. Ios	Further detour, riddle of the fisher-boys, death

[44] Clearly the fact that Pseudo-Herodotus has Homer acquire the gift of poetry at his birthplace is a further ramification of the theme of birth in Smyrna that I have already discussed.

[45] This poem, mentioned nowhere else in extant Greek literature (except by Hesychius, who seems to be drawing on Pseudo-Herodotus), must overlap in content with the *Thebaid* and may in fact be another name for that poem or for part of that poem.

Although the movement of Homer's journey itself is complex, it is clearly centrifugal rather than centripetal in effect. Rather than representing the composition of Homeric epic in terms of the gathering of stories from disparate places to be transformed into epic in a central location by a central figure, Pseudo-Herodotus uses Homer's travels as a means to account for the wide distribution of epic across the Greek world while maintaining Homer's individual authorship of a large number of epics. Pseudo-Herodotus takes the most strongly Unitarian stance of any of Homer's biographers; indeed, with the exception of the *Certamen*, none of the other *Lives* takes seriously any claims to authorship other than of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Further, Pseudo-Herodotus' use of the epigrams, embedded within a narrative of travel, provides an important motivation for the epigrams as an epichoric by-product of a Panhellenic poet.

The way in which the *Life* makes this Unitarian claim is, however, just as interesting as the fact that the claim is made at all. Pseudo-Herodotus places an extraordinary emphasis on Homer's time on Chios, suggesting that Homer composed the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the *paignia* or more frivolous poems, and two of the epigrams while on Chios, and that he additionally married and had two daughters, and opened a school in which he taught his epics (382 West). I have already commented on the fact that Pseudo-Herodotus seems to favor a non-genealogical transmission of epic through his school rather than through his descendants and that Pseudo-Herotodus, apart from denying the claim that Thestorides could be considered the legitimate author of the *Little Iliad*, does not mention the other poems of the *Epic Cycle* at any point. The other works he does attribute to Homer (beyond those said to have been composed on Chios) are *Amphiaraus' Expedition to Thebes*, the *Homeric Hymns*, the *Little Iliad*, and the *Phocais*.

Pseudo-Herodotus thus constructs three concentric circles of Homeric epic, set at varying distances from Homer himself and from the island of Chios (the supposed home, note, of the Homeridae). The innermost circle of works are those composed by Homer himself while on Chios: the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and the *paignia*. Next are those works composed by Homer elsewhere than on Chios: *Amphiaraus' Expedition to Thebes*, the *Homeric Hymns*, the *Little Iliad*, and the *Phocais*. The outer circle would consist of those poems in the epic cycle not mentioned in Pseudo-Herodotus: the *Cypria*, the *Aethiopis*,

the *Iliou persis*, the *Nostoi*, and the *Telegonia* (none of which are in fact mentioned by any of our *Lives*, though other sources connect their traditional authors to Homer genealogically). This tripartite structure might seem to suggest varying degrees to which the Homeridae laid claim to the epic tradition. For those works in the inner circle the Pseudo-Herodotean *Life* not only asserts Homeric authorship but also asserts the Chian (and thus perhaps the Homeridae's) claim to the authentic transmission of the poems. For the second circle, Homeric authorship is asserted, but the transmission is relinquished to other cities and groups. Finally, with the outer circle and the other elements of the Epic Cycle, no claims are made concerning either authorship or transmission, although Pseudo-Herodotus, through both silence and outright denial, does resist alternative claims to authorship. The implication that the Pseudo-Herodotean life has something to do with the Homeridae is clear.

It is worth noting that this structure also maps onto the broader claims about the authorship of the epic tradition. The poems in the inner circle are generally agreed (among our *Lives* at least) to be by Homer; those in the second circle are disputed, whereas those in the outer circle are more generally attributed to others. Whether or not Pseudo-Herodotus directly reflects the views of the Homeridae, its understanding of the production of epic very clearly centers on Chios. This *Life* projects into the geographic realm the filiation of texts to authors, a process understood elsewhere in genealogical terms; it is unclear whether this means that Pseudo-Herodotus (and/or the Chian tradition) is seeking to supplant a dominant genealogical tradition with this geographic move, or whether, conversely, the Chian tradition might come first, and other authors might be attempting to replace Homer's travels with kinship, gift-exchange, and tutelage relationships as a means of accounting for the circulation of epic.

At any rate, the system we can detect at work in Pseudo-Herodotus clearly centers the epic tradition on Homer and on Chios, and accounts for the distribution of epic throughout the Greek world through the device of travel rather than through genealogy. From the perspective of the Homeridae, this approach would have had the benefit of consolidating their absolute control over the core of the tradition, while relinquishing other works to other epichoric traditions. Given the overlap between the Homeric corpus as recognized more

generally (the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, plus possibly the *paignia*) and that said by Pseudo-Herodotus to have been composed on Chios, it is even possible that the tradition of the Homeridae is the source for later ideas about which texts Homer is and is not responsible for.

The *Certamen* is the only other *Life* to make heavy use of the device of travel, and not coincidentally it is, after Pseudo-Herodotus, the most strongly Unitarian of the *Lives*. Curiously, there is little overlap in the works attributed to Homer in these two accounts, apart from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*; the only other overlap is with the *Hymns*. Otherwise, the *Certamen* attributes the *Thebaid* and the *Epigonoi* (two of the major works of the Theban cycle) to Homer; the remainder of the Trojan epic cycle it passes over in silence. This tendency for the *Certamen* to emphasize parts of the potential Homeric corpus different from those discussed by Pseudo-Herodotus is mirrored by the two *Lives'* quite distinct Homeric itineraries. The only place that the two *Lives* agree was visited by Homer is Ios, the site of his death, and we have already discussed the significance of the *Certamen*'s mention (and Pseudo-Herodotus' omission) of Creophylus. Other than Ios, the *Certamen* has Homer travel to Delphi twice (in order to consult the oracle there), to Aulis (where he meets Hesiod and they travel together to Chalchis in Euboea for the actual poetic contest), to Athens (where Homer performs the version of *Epigram* 13 altered anachronistically to suit Athenian democratic tastes), and to Corinth and Argos (in both of which cities he recites his poetry, with an emphasis on verses chosen for their epichoric appeal). In addition, it notes that Homer traveled to many towns (324 West), a generic statement that substitutes for the more extensive description of Homer's journeys with Mentes in Pseudo-Herodotus.

In general, then, travel in the *Certamen* has both a different pragmatic goal and a different physical destination from that in Pseudo-Herodotus. The visits to Corinth, Argos, and Athens double for Pseudo-Herodotus' discussion of the abortive visit to Athens, and all three of these *Certamen* journeys focus on the adaptation of Panhellenic epic (or epigram) to suit epichoric conditions. The trips to Delphi, where Homer is warned to avoid Ios, motivate the death narrative set there, whereas that to Aulis facilitates the poetic contest with Hesiod, which is of course the *raison d'être* of the *Certamen* as a text. Significantly, where Pseudo-Herodotus presents Homer's visit to Ios

as an accident, the *Certamen* represents it as motivated by a desire to meet Creophylus, and underlines the urgency of that meeting through the mention of the Delphic pronouncement urging Homer to avoid Delphi. Where Pseudo-Herodotus avoids all mention of Creophylus, and downplays the entire visit to Ios, the *Certamen*, although silent on the purpose of Homer's visit to Creophylus, certainly endows that visit with some significance.

Also significant is the fact that, in the *Certamen*, poetic composition is not tied to travel, with the exception of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, which he composes on Delos. In narrative sequence, the *Certamen* has Homer write the two Theban poems immediately after his departure from the contest at Chalchis, and before visiting Midas' sons to compose their father's epitaph. The sons present Homer with a silver cup, which he dedicates at Delphi; the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are composed after this second visit to Delphi and before his arrival in Athens. Not only does this narrative seem to place the composition of works between visits to cities rather than in any one city, it is also difficult to reconcile with the story of the competition itself, in which Homer quotes from the *Iliad*, which the frame-narrative says he has not yet composed! The most likely explanation here is probably that the compiler of our *Certamen* (or, more likely, his sources), unlike Pseudo-Herodotus, is simply not interested in using travel as a device to account for the production and circulation of texts.[46] In this text, poems composed by Homer remain strongly linked with Homer, and not with their places of composition – a centripetal move that concentrates the epic tradition on Homer and on his successors (possibly on the Creophylei) and generally excludes the possibility of the independent transmission of individual texts elsewhere.

Given that the *Certamen* and Pseudo-Herodotus seem to have different views on the circulation of Homeric poetry, and given further that they disagree both on the works composed by Homer and on the

[46] This is not the only blatant self-contradiction in the frame-narrative to the *Certamen*: we saw that the frame-narrative cites a Hadrianic-era Delphic oracle to show that Homer was born on Ithaca (322 West); a few pages later we read another Delphic oracle (the source for which is Aristotle, if Pseudo-Plutarch I is to be believed (326, 408 West)), in which Ios is described as his homeland. It seems likely that our compiler is uncritically assembling his source materials here, and that the points of self-contradiction are points of little or no ideological significance for him.

trajectory of his travels, it seems likely that they are drawing on different sources, which are to some extent in rivalry with each other. Based on the *Certamen* compiler's mention that Homer's intention in visiting Ios was to meet Creophylus (who was, remember, not mentioned at all by Pseudo-Herodotus), one might rather speculatively connect the frame-story of the *Certamen* to a tradition claiming descent from Creophylus. Such a tradition is also associated with the transmission of Homeric epic to Sparta; in my discussion of the biographical device of recension below, I will return to this claim.[47]

Transcription

Ancient as well as modern Homeric scholars have had an extensive interest in the process by which epic was transferred from oral tradition to written text. I have shown that several of the Homeric lives explicitly take the view that Homer himself composed his poems in writing, but those who disagree develop other theories to account for the transcription and dissemination of epic. Aside from the various accounts of the Pesistratean recension, which deserve separate treatment, there are three episodes within the extant *Lives* that deal with specific acts of transcription of epic.[48] Each of these three episodes reveals quite different assumptions about how these processes work – and what their value might be.

One of these episodes involves Homer writing down his own poem, in this case the *Oechalias halôsis*, or the *Capture of Oechalia*. Proclus tells us that Homer wrote (*grapsanta*) the *Capture of Oechalia* and then gave it to Creophylus, under whose name it later circulated (420 West).

[47] I ignore here the one remaining account of Homeric travel not already discussed, found in Aristotle's account of Homer, as presented to us by Pseudo-Plutarch I. Aside from all of his initial travel, whose significance we might understand better with further context, Aristotle (as quoted by Pseudo-Plutarch I) mentions one other Homeric journey, one not mentioned elsewhere. He has Homer travel to Thebes to perform in a poetic competition at the Cronia festival there, in a story that has obvious structural parallels to the core story of the *Certamen*, albeit displaced onto a different location.

[48] I use the term "transcription" here in the sense defined by Nagy (1996) 68 of the writing down of a performance of verbal art, not as an equivalent to performance, but as a means of achieving performance. Note in particular that the story of Thestorides below assumes that the most valuable function of a transcript is that it can be used to achieve a performance.

A variety of other ancient sources discuss this story. Strabo (14.1.18) reports this version, along with a Callimachean fragment making the reverse claim:

> I am the work of the Samian who once welcomed the divine singer
> To his home. I grieve for how Eurytus suffered,
> And for blonde Ioleia. I am called Homeric
> Writing. Dear Zeus, this is a great matter for Creophylus.
>
> Τοῦ Σαμίου πόνος εἰμὶ δόμῳ ποτὲ θεῖον ἀοιδόν
> δεξαμένου, κλείω δ' Εὔρυτον ὅσσ' ἔπαθεν,
> καὶ ξανθὴν Ἰόλειαν, Ὁμήρειον δὲ καλεῦμαι
> γράμμα· Κρεωφύλῳ, Ζεῦ φίλε, τοῦτο μέγα.
>
> (Callimachus *Epigram* 6 Pfeiffer)[49]

The fact that this anecdote can be used with an opposite conclusion is, perhaps, its chief significance. Callimachus takes the view that the (false) attribution of the poem to Homer does Creophylus honor, presumably by suggesting that his work is of sufficient quality to be confused with Homeric epic.[50] In Proclus' life of Homer, the anecdote is designed instead to show that Homer himself honored his host, allowing him to take credit for a work authored by Homer himself. Both versions of the anecdote insist that the poem itself is from the beginning a *written* work, and in fact both versions identify Homer as the one writing. References to the authorship of the *Capture of Oechalia* in fact almost uniformly mention both Homer and Creophylus; what is significant for our sources is not which of these two men wrote the poem, but the poem as a form of exchange between the two, a means of linking them to each other. The written poem here becomes a physical commodity, capable of being exchanged and circulated independent of its author in ways an oral poem cannot be. Also revealing is the gift-economy model for the circulation of

[49] Note that this epigram appears in slightly different form in our editions of Strabo. Other versions of this anecdote are found, for example, at Plato *Republic* 600b, Pausanias 4.2.3, *Suda* κ 2376, Eustathius 300.41. The *Suda* informs us that Creophylus is Homer's son-in-law, adding the biographical device of genealogy to the model of circulation represented. See above under *Birthplace and Genealogy* for a discussion of this possibility.

[50] The confusion is a programmatic device in this passage. The first words Τοῦ Σαμίου πόνος ("the labor of the Samian") create the expectation that Homer is being discussed, only to subvert that expectation in the following clause.

literature employed here, in which the transaction is understood as adding to the prestige of its participants.[51] Such a model is hardly innocent of socioeconomic implications, in that it suggests a literary system of circulation dependent on the existing social hierarchy, but it is quite distinct from a modern market-oriented model of circulation. Because Creophylus is the imagined founder of one of the two prominent lineages of Homeric rhapsodes, a discussion of the relationship between Homer and Creophylus also becomes a means of legitimating a claim of transmission.

The pseudo-Herodotean *Life* offers us a negatively marked version of the same general pattern. In a story we have already mentioned, Pseudo-Herodotus tells us that a Phocaean named Thestorides arranged to care for Homer in exchange for being allowed to transcribe Homer's poems; when Thestorides finished transcribing two poems (the *Phocais* and the *Little Iliad*), he absconded with them to Chios, where he established a school and grew wealthy through performing the epics he transcribed (370–72 West). In part, this story seems to challenge the more common account of the composition of the *Little Iliad*, usually attributed to Lesches of Mitylene when it is not attributed to Homer himself.[52]

More importantly, from our perspective, the anecdote makes important claims about the composition and dissemination of Homeric epic in general. Given Pseudo-Herodotus' emphasis on the oral composition of Homeric epic, reinforced by his insistence that Homer only became a poet after he became blind, it is especially striking that the one scene of transcription he represents is cast in such a negative light. His emphasis is squarely on the loss of control suffered by a verbal artist when his work is encoded in writing and can circulate without his consent. Implicit here seems to be the idea that if epic circulates only in oral format, its author can control that circulation much more readily.

[51] For a detailed account of this sort of gift-economy among the Gitxsan and Wet'suwet'en nations of northern British Columbia, see Daly (2005).

[52] So, for example, *schol. Pind. Nem* vi.85, *schol. Lycophr.* 344, *schol. Ar. Lysistr.* 155. NB also that Hellanicus seems to have attributed the poem to Cinaethon. If we knew more of either the *Phocais* or the *Little Iliad* we might be able to discern the implications of these biographical attributions for the claims of epichoric and Panhellenic epic traditions, but even with our state of knowledge of the epic cycle it seems clear that a Unitarian position is also a Panhellenic one, whereas an Analyst position corresponds to the epichoric.

If we connect this *Life* to the Homeridae, then its devaluation of written transmission of the epics may assume particular significance. The claim that Homer composed his epic once blind,[53] and that he did not for the most part dictate his poetry for others to transcribe, aligns the legitimate transmission of the tradition with a community of oral performers who can trace their professional training back to Homer himself, such, perhaps, as the Homeridae. The contrast here with Proclus' recounting of the Creophylus story is telling, and similar to the contrast between their respective uses of the biographical device of travel. Where Proclus has Homer willingly transfer control of a written copy of his poem to a friend, the Pseudo-Herodotean author presents an ostensible host and benefactor of Homer betraying Homer's trust by illicitly circulating (in performance) a poem he has copied from Homer under false pretences. The story Proclus tells assumes that a poem may legitimately be embodied on the page (or the scroll), and that a poem may be exchanged legitimately like any other commodity. Pseudo-Herodotus, by representing his textual transcription and exchange as obtained under false pretences, seems to rely on a model in which the legitimate value of poetry resides in its oral performance, and in which transmission of the poem from one singer to another would require an orally based master–student relationship, not the private or secret reading and memorizing of the text. As we have seen before, the ideologies of the *Lives* cut across modern scholarly divides: Proclus' life mixes textual transmission with a fluid notion of authorship, whereas the pseudo-Herodotean *Life* valorizes oral transmission, but insists much more strongly on the idea of a fixed author for each text.

A third model of textual transmission is represented in the *Certamen*, when that text's Homer visits Delos:

> And standing at the Horned Altar he spoke the *Hymn to Apollo*, which begins:
>
> "I shall recall, and shall not forget far-shooting Apollo."
>
> When he had said the hymn the Ionians made him a citizen of their states in common, and the Delians wrote his verses on a notice-board and set it up in the temple of Artemis.

[53] As I argue in Beecroft (2010), a blind Homer is perforce a Homer who composes his poetry orally, especially when, as in Pseudo-Herodotus, he is represented as only beginning his poetic career after becoming blind.

καὶ σταθεὶς ἐπὶ τὸν κεράτινον βωμὸν λέγει ὕμνον εἰς Ἀπόλλωνα οὗ ἡ ἀρχή

μνήσομαι οὐδὲ λάθωμαι Ἀπόλλωνος ἑκάτοιο.

ῥηθέντος δὲ τοῦ ὕμνου οἱ μὲν Ἴωνες πολίτην αὐτὸν κοινὸν ἐποιήσαντο, Δήλιοι δὲ γράψαντες τὰ ἔπη εἰς λεύκωμα ἀνέθηκαν ἐν τῷ τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος ἱερῷ. (350 West)

Where the circulation of epic in written form is represented by Proclus in the terms of a gift-economy, and by Pseudo-Herodotus in terms of theft or fraud, the *Certamen* represents it as the bestowal of a Panionic honor on Homer, one structurally parallel to the granting of citizenship. In other respects, the *Certamen*'s model of textualization seems intermediate between our other two examples. The *Certamen* anecdote not only legitimates transcription as a valid form of poetic circulation, but indeed allows the act of transcription to confer legitimacy on the text itself – Homer's *Hymn* gains value from its being written down and placed in a temple. Although this positive valorization of transcription may seem close to Proclus,[54] there seems to be nothing of the fluidity of authorship associated with the Creophylus story. Also important is the mode of circulation implied by this scene of transcription; where the manuscript transcription practiced by Thestorides circulates a text spatially, accounting for Panhellenic distribution, the temple inscription discussed here facilitates temporal circulation, granting the hymn a level of permanence, textual fixity, and authorial identity not otherwise possible, but restricting its use to a single epichoric context.

The *Certamen*'s account of the transcription of the *Hymn to Apollo* does not tell us explicitly whether the placard said to have been erected in the Temple of Artemis bore Homer's name, but the general tone and context of the passage makes this a plausible inference. If that is how the anecdote should be understood, then this story would in fact represent the most "modern" of the three models for textualization found in the *Lives*, in that this model allows both for a fixed text legitimated by its textuality and for a fixed author, where our other two scenes of transcription concerned themselves with fixing either

54 We should note as well that in the *Certamen* Homer goes from Delos to Ios, where he meets Creophylus before dying. Both the *Certamen* and Proclus use the encounter with Creophylus as the penultimate episode in Homer's life, seemingly reinforcing the prestige associated with the transcription on Delos.

authorship (Pseudo-Herodotus) or the text (Proclus), but not both. Some of the *Lives* go much further; Hesychius of Miletus (as reported in the *Suda*), the first Pseudo-Plutarchan *Life*, and Proclus himself all state explicitly that Homer *wrote* his poems. As we have seen, the other *Lives* either explicitly claim or implicitly assume oral composition, whether because they posit a blind Homer or because the language they use avoids any clear reference to Homer as a writer. The authors of these *Lives* are then faced with the same challenge faced by modern Homerists: how to account for the transition from an oral poetic tradition to the fixed written texts we now have (and that were known to all of the immediate authors of our *Lives*, if not perhaps to all of their sources). Most of the *Lives* avoid this question altogether, and none offers a fully coherent view; the three scenes of transcription I have examined imply and embody quite distinct solutions, each projecting its implicit theory of transcription into biographical narrative.

Recension and Reception

Similarly interesting are the representations of the Peisistratean recension in the three (late) lives that mention it.[55] In each case the figure of Peisistratus is another effective device for demonstrating the author's views on the composition and transmission of epic. Hesychius suggests that Homer wrote each of the books of the *Iliad* separately, as he travelled from city to city, leaving behind a book here and a book there as he went; later, various figures, but especially Peisistratus, collected the books together to compile the complete poem (428–30 West). The *Vitae Scorialenses* offer a broadly similar narrative, with the important distinction (representing, in all probability, the convictions of their unnamed source) that they have Homer *singing*, rather than writing, the several books of the *Iliad* as he travelled (West 440, 446).

[55] The "Peisistratean recension" is an account of the assemblage of Homeric epic in which the tyrannical régime of Peisistratus and his sons (in the second half of the sixth century BC) is responsible for gathering the scattered elements of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. On the Peisistratean recension generally, see esp. Ritoók (1993). Wyrick (2004), using a methodological approach similar to mine, examines accounts of the recension found in the scholia to the second century BC grammarian Dionysius Thrax. He reads the legends about the recension in terms of the rival claims of the libraries of Pergamon and Alexandria in Hellenistic times, given the Pergamene library's claim to possess the Peisistratean text of Homer.

Where Hesychius (or at least his sources) uses the story of Peisistratus' collecting epic fragments to advance the claim that the epics were written from the very beginning, the *Vitae Scorialenses* present a case for oral transmission as the predominant mode. Combined with the fact that Hesychius initially suggests that Homer was blind from childhood, but later seems to allegorize the blindness away, and that the *Vitae Scorialenses*, in their very different ways, are insistent on Homer's literal status as a blind poet, we will begin to see a somewhat coherent pattern emerge, in which Hesychius conceives of the composition and transmission of Homeric epic entirely in textual terms, whereas the *Vitae Scorialenses*, among others, accept a greater role for orality in both processes.[56]

The fact that each of these three lives, and only these three, mentions the Peisistratean recension at all is itself revealing. Whether the poems are oral or textual, the recension story assumes that Homer never performed or wrote his epics as continuous works but rather created different parts of the story in different places at different times for different audiences. These three lives have, in one respect at least, a model of authorship in that all three privilege the editor over the author; they claim that it is Peisitratus, and not Homer, who creates the poems as we know (and the authors of the *Lives* knew) them. Under this model, the original context of composition assumes a diminished importance, and the context of editing looms larger, in a manner reminiscent of the privileging of Confucius' role in the collecting and editing of the Confucian classics.[57] The emphasis these short *Lives* place on the recension theory serve to undermine the authority of the poet, and to increase that of the editor. Further, the displacement of the act of composition from the poet to the editor also shifts the emergence of Homeric epic as a Panhellenic cultural

[56] The coherence has its limits; the second *Vita Scorialensis*, after insisting on Homer's blindness, claims that he "wrote" his own epitaph, using a verb, *kharassô*, that emphasizes the physicality of the act of writing (ἔθαψαν δ᾽ αὐτὸν μεγαλοπρεπῶς οἱ ἼΗται, χαράξαντες ἐπὶ τῷ τάφῳ τὸ ἐπί γραμμα τοῦτο παρ᾽ αὐτοῦ ζῶντος ἔτι γεγραμμένον εἰς αὐτόν).

[57] As we saw in the previous chapter, this claim is made only comparatively late; earlier sources on Confucius do not credit him with editing the classics. This Ruist claim shows structural similarities to that made in the story of the Peisistratean recension: a simultaneous privileging of collection and transmission over composition, and the projection of that collection and transmission onto a culture-hero.

force from Homer's own time (whenever that is understood to have been) to the late sixth century BC, and from the unlocatable location of Homer's composition of the poems to Athens, at precisely the moment at which that city's relative position in the Greek world is beginning to rise.

Beyond the *Lives* of Homer, we encounter two other accounts of the transmission of Homeric epic to major Greek *poleis*. Plutarch's biography of Lycurgus, the legendary lawgiver of Sparta, closely mirrors the claim of the Peisistratean recension:[58]

> There (i.e., in Ionia) Lycurgus chanced upon the poems of Homer for the first time, it appears, preserved by the descendants of Creophylus. He observed in these poems, mixed up with the diversions of pleasure and lack of restraint, matters of state and of educational value no less worthy of serious study on that account. He eagerly wrote the poems down and collected them to be brought back to Sparta. The epics already held a certain vague reputation among the Greeks, and some men owned a few pieces of the poems scattered here and there by chance. It was Lycurgus, however, in particular who first made these poems famous.
>
> ἐκεῖ δὲ καὶ τοῖς Ὁμήρου ποιήμασιν ἐντυχὼν πρῶτον, ὡς ἔοικε, παρὰ τοῖς ἐκγόνοις τοῖς Κρεοφύλου διατηρουμένοις, καὶ κατιδὼν ἐν αὐτοῖς τῆς πρὸς ἡδονὴν καὶ ἀκρασίαν διατριβῆς τὸ πολιτικὸν καὶ παιδευτικὸν οὐκ ἐλάττονος ἄξιον σπουδῆς ἀναμεμιγμένον, ἐγράψατο προθύμως καὶ συνήγαγεν ὡς δεῦρο κομιῶν. ἦν γάρ τις ἤδη δόξα τῶν ἐπῶν ἀμαυρὰ παρὰ τοῖς Ἕλλησιν, ἐκέκτηντο δὲ οὐ πολλοὶ μέρη τινά, σποράδην τῆς ποιήσεως, ὡς ἔτυχε, διαφερομένης· γνωρίμην δὲ αὐτὴν καὶ μάλιστα πρῶτος ἐποίησε Λυκοῦργος. (Plut. *Lyc.* 4.3)

Our comprehension of this passage is hindered by the fact that it is filtered through pro-Athenian sources. Janko has argued that it reflects genuine Spartan tradition, whereas Graziosi has suggested that the Athenians may have played up the Spartan connection to Creophylus, as the poet associated with the *Capture of Oechalia*, in order to give greater prominence to their own recension narrative, whose dramatic date was later but which linked Athens to the much more significant *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.[59] The details of which side invented which details at which point are beyond retrieval; in any case, we see the major Greek *poleis* deploying history in support of their own claims

[58] See also Aristotle fr. 611.10 Rose.

[59] Janko (1992) 31n50; Graziosi (2002) 220.

to an authentic connection to Homer. We hear a similar account, with similar problems, of the role claimed by Syracuse in the transmission of Homeric epic:

> They say that the earlier Homeridae were of the line of Homer – the ones who sang his own poetry in direct succession. But afterward there were also rhapsodes no longer raised in Homer's line. Especially known were the rhapsodes affiliated with Cynaethus, who they say composed many epics and interpolated them into the poetry of Homer. Cynaethus was from Chios, and it is said that he composed the hymn written to Apollo which is among the poems ascribed to Homer. This same Cynaethus was the first to perform Homeric epic in Syracuse in the Sixty-Ninth Olympiad (i.e., 504–500 BC), as Hippostratus tells us.
>
> Ὁμηρίδας ἔλεγον τὸ μὲν ἀρχαῖον τοὺς ἀπὸ τοῦ Ὁμήρου γένους, οἳ καὶ τὴν ποίησιν αὐτοῦ ἐκ διαδοχῆς ᾖδον· μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα καὶ οἱ ῥαψῳδοὶ οὐκέτι τὸ γένος εἰς Ὅμηρον ἀνάγοντες· ἐπιφανεῖς δὲ ἐγένοντο οἱ περὶ Κύναιθον, οὗς φασι πολλὰ τῶν ἐπῶν ποιήσαντας ἐμβαλεῖν εἰς τὴν Ὁμήρου ποίησιν. Ἦν δὲ ὁ Κύναιθος Χῖος, ὃς καὶ τῶν ἐπιγραφομένων Ὁμήρου ποιημάτων τὸν εἰς Ἀπόλλωνα γεγραμμένον ὕμνον λέγεται πεποιηκέναι. Οὗτος οὖν ὁ Κύναιθος πρῶτος ἐν Συρακούσαις ἐρραψῴδησε τὰ Ὁμήρου ἔπη κατὰ τὴν ἑξηκοστὴν ἐννάτην Ὀλυμπιάδα, ὡς Ἱππόστρατός φησιν. (*scholia Σ ad* Pindari *Nem.* II.1)

This account of Cynaethus' role in bringing Homeric epic to Syracuse is more clearly hostile than Plutarch's version of the Lycurgus–Creophylus narrative; because this is our only source for the story, it is difficult to determine with precision what the Syracusans actually claimed regarding Cynaethus. We have already seen that the authorship of the *Hymn to Apollo* was in fact disputed between Cynaethus and Homer. It seems likely that the rhapsodes associated with Cynaethus were represented as claiming a broader corpus as authentically Homeric, in the face of other, more restrictive, definitions, although we cannot be certain given the hostile nature of this report and the complete absence of Cynaethus from our *Lives*. The Syracusan story and its hostile treatment here seem to reflect a debate about the size of the Homeric canon and its date of composition, as well as providing another example of a *polis* claiming privileged access to the authentic tradition of Homeric epic, even if the details remain obscure.

Given the limited nature of our sources, we cannot be certain that such claims were limited to Athens, Sparta, and Syracuse, but the

existence of three such claims is enough to suggest a pattern.[60] These myths are interesting as claims for the centrality of a particular *polis* to the Panhellenic cultural economy, and in each case they remap the legacy of Archaic epic onto contemporary Classical power structures. There are of course significant differences among these three stories; in particular, the Syracusan version represents the Homeric canon as already intact when transmitted to Syracuse, whereas the Athenian and Spartan versions stress the role their respective *poleis* played in collecting the scattered remains of a tradition. Nonetheless, all three versions share as a common element the notion that the textual fixation of Homeric epic and the closing of the Homeric canon are both processes that require critical judgment; all three accounts lay claim, in other words, to being moments at which it is decided once and for all which poems Homer wrote and what the words of those poems are. The question at stake is the point at which the Homeric corpus enters Panhellenic discourse in its final form. The Pseudo-Herodotean *Life* and the *Certamen* (or their sources) locate that Panhellenic moment in the lifetime of Homer himself. Pseudo-Herodotus uses the biographical device of travel to map the Homeric canon to the sites of emergence for each text, whereas the *Certamen* seems to enact a claim for the centralized transmission of Homeric epic.[61]

Our three narratives of recension and reception, by contrast, imply a failed version of the model represented by Pseudo-Herodotus. All three narratives agree with Pseudo-Herodotus in accepting the notion that Homeric poetry exists at some point in scattered form, with components preserved in different locations. Because Pseudo-Herodotus interprets those components as entire poems, his model situates the Panhellenic moment in Homer's own lifetime. The two recension narratives (which seem to draw on a more restricted notion of the

[60] Nagy interprets the Peisistratean recension and its Spartan equivalent as myths of lawgivers as culture-heroes editing Homeric epic in their respective *poleis*, and has also characterized the Pesistratean recension as a mythologization of the process of textualization, drawing on cross-cultural parallels to suggest that in general such stories of the reassemblage of scattered texts are mythical representations of the process of composition-in-performance (Nagy (1996) 72).

[61] Note again the parallels with the projection by Han-era Ruists of their own compilation and editing of the classics backward onto Confucius.

Homeric canon) see this fragmentation of the Homeric corpus as a fragmentation of individual poems; the Panhellenic moment is thus projected forward (to the seventh century in the case of Sparta and Lycurgus and to the late sixth century in the case of the Peisistratids and Athens), and the Panhellenic function is shifted from the author to the redactor. The Syracusan story is in some way analogous to that represented in the *Certamen*: an intact tradition is transmitted from one center (Chios) to another (Syracuse), enhancing the prestige of both in the process. All three accounts of transmission or recension, in other words, seek to present their respective *poleis* as gatekeepers of the Homeric tradition, supplanting in the process the claims of guilds of rhapsodes on Chios and elsewhere.

These considerations allow us better to understand the claims made by *Lives of Homer* regarding the Peisistratean recension and Creophylus. When a *Life* endorses the Peisistratean recension, as Hesychius and the *Vitae Scorialenses* do, it endorses the Athenian claim to monopolize the authentic transmission of Homer, and in the process must claim that Homeric epic was composed and performed in pieces, with much of the real work of authorship belonging to the redactors. When, in contrast, Pseudo-Plutarch II insists that the book-divisions of Homeric epic are a later innovation, he makes the opposite claim, that Homeric epic was always already intact, and that the representation of those texts as divisible is an artifact of a later, more heavily textualized phase. Such a claim also makes Homer the author of his own Panhellenic status, composing complete poems that negotiate a diverse range of epichoric interests, as opposed to representing him as an *ad hoc* performer of shorter episodes, possibly adapted to suit the interests of his local audiences. Once again, the evidence does not permit us to take sides in this debate ourselves, but does give us the opportunity to sense something of its workings.

Conclusions

These *Lives* are composed according to a variety of strategies. All of them make use to some degree of preexisting material – sometimes indicating sources, sometimes not. Few can be dated with much precision, as we have seen. Some (most notably the *Certamen* and Pseudo-Herodotus) take the form of a continuous narrative of Homer's life.

Others, such as Proclus and Hesychius, are more expository in character, treating major issues and events and passing authorial judgment on these issues, but not offering a life story. The others are for the most part later catalogs, enumerating the views of others without (usually) reaching explicit conclusions. Not surprisingly, it is in the *Certamen*, Pseudo-Herodotus, Proclus, and Hesychius that we find the closest approaches to ideological consistency on questions of authorship.

Of these, the *Certamen* offers the most attenuated model of authorship. Its central focus on Homer's (and Hesiod's) improvisational skill (coupled with its general tendency to believe in Homer's blindness) suggest a belief in performance as fundamental to authorship, indeed valuing performance over composition. The account of the inscription of the *Hymn to Apollo* at Delos represents a model for textualization in which authorial rights to the text are respected, precisely because the inscription does not circulate, and also represents this scene of transcription as a rare and singular honor rather than as a normal part of compositional practice. This implies a Homer who is an illiterate oral poet who composes works in performance, but these claims are nowhere insisted upon. At the same time, although the frame-story of the *Certamen* (and/or its sources, which seem at times to be used uncritically) identifies through its narrative a closed canon of Homeric poetry, it does not represent that canon geographically, suggesting a Panhellenic status for the entire corpus, one focused around a privileged line of transmission, which I have very tentatively suggested might be the Creophylei.

The pseudo-Herodotean *Life* is more dogmatic. Uniquely among the *Lives*, it insists that Homer's poetic career began only *after* he became blind; it represents him as having been literate and as having traveled widely, but as not using his ability to write in the composition of his poetry. Like the *Certamen*, Pseudo-Herodotus emphasizes Homer's ability to improvise, composing epigrams to suit the situations in which he finds himself. He accepts a very broad canon of authentically Homeric works, further emphasizing Homer's compositional facility. Transcription is viewed with hostility and is represented as a loss of authorial control over the circulation of his work. The author of this *Life*, in other words, believes strongly in Homer's composition of his poetry without writing, and indeed represents writing as dangerous to the epic tradition. If we accept the association of this *Life* with

the Homeridae, then the implied poetics offered herein acquires an ideological goal, asserting that the only legitimate access to Homeric epic is through oral transmission from teacher to student. Even without the link to the Homeridae, the internal evidence suggests the goal of constructing a theory of composition and circulation for Homeric epic in which writing plays no necessary or desirable part. Finally, the explicit and detailed mapping of a canon of Homeric poetry onto the cities visited by Homer accounts at once for the paramount role for Chios in the transmission of epic, and for the counterbalancing presence of alternative sites of legitimate transmission for minor poems. The Homeric canon is here presented at its broadest, but with that breadth comes a polycentric model of transmission and circulation.

If the *Certamen* and Pseudo-Herodotus represent the champions of oral performance, then Proclus and Hesychius are the leading proponents of a writing-centered theory of epic. Proclus vehemently attacks those who claim that Homer was blind. He explicitly insists that Homer used writing to compose his epics, and restricts the Homeric corpus more than any other of the *Lives*, to the point of contemplating separate authors for the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The circulation of written versions of epic is seen in a positive light. Hesychius' account is less ideologically committed, but in its account of the Peisistratean recension we can see clear signs of an attempt to reformulate accounts of Homer's life so as to render them consistent with a textual model of production and circulation.

The other *Lives*, most of which catalog the opinions of others without reaching strong conclusions of their own, do not and could not be expected to offer distinctive ideological programs concerning authorship and textuality. Nonetheless, such programs can sometimes be discerned in the individual anecdotes they relate. Although these *Lives* are clearly useless as sources for biographical information, if we read them instead as offering implicit theories about texts, we find the traces of ancient debates about how, why, and for whom Homeric epic came into being. In the case of Homer the relative abundance of biographical anecdote makes this implicit poetics comparatively legible, and thus Homer is a logical methodological test case for this strategy. As we turn next to Terpander, for whom the evidence is in every way more slender and problematic, these methodological lessons will prove useful.

Excursus on the Lives of Homer

There are a number of texts that could be called *Lives of Homer*, with the most readily available editions being Allen (1912–19) v. 5 and West (2003). I cite from West's Loeb edition, in part to give non-Hellenists access to the text via the facing-page English translations. There are a number of differences between Allen's and West's editions, most significantly that they include different collections of texts in different sequences:

West 2003	Allen 1912	My Title
The Contest of Homer and Hesiod	Certamen Homeri et Hesiodi	Certamen
(Pseudo)-Herodotus on Homer's Origins, Dates and Life	Vita Herodotea	Pseudo-Herodotus
(Pseudo)-Plutarch on Homer (I)	Plutarchi De Homero Librorum Pars I	Pseudo-Plutarch I
(Pseudo)-Plutarch on Homer (II)	Plutarchi De Homero Librorum Pars II	Pseudo-Plutarch II
Proclus	(found in text of *Chrestomathy*)	Proclus
Hesychius of Miletus	(found in *Suda* entry on Homer as included)	Hesychius
Anonymous I	Vita VI	Vita Romana
Anonymous II	Vita IV	Vita Scorialensis I
Anonymous III	Vita V	Vita Scorialensis II
	Vita VII	
	Tzetzes	

I omit discussion of Allen's *Vita VII* and of the extract from Tzetzes, neither of which add much to this discussion. Both Allen and West excerpt the biographical elements from longer texts in some cases,

and they do not always agree in how to do so. Gigante's 1996 edition, although not as widely available in North American libraries, is especially helpful for its introduction, although I do not share all of its assessments. For convenience, I use "Pseudo-Herodotus" and "Pseudo-Plutarch" as names for the authors of their respective texts. Even though much of the material in these *Lives* must predate the texts we have (not least because much of the material is repeated from one *Life* to another), I would argue that the selection of material by each author is as significant to the implicit poetic program of that *Life* as if the material originated with the author. Some notes on dating follow, with the very limited intention of providing context for the reader:

The Certamen: In the frame-narrative mention is made of a Delphic oracular response obtained by the emperor Hadrian; the text cannot therefore have assumed its final form earlier. It is nonetheless agreed that the core narrative, that of the actual competition between Hesiod and Homer, probably derives from Alcidamas, the fourth-century sophist. Alcidamas himself may be drawing on earlier sources (Gigante 42).

Pseudo-Herodotus: Because this *Life* contradicts some of the information given by Herodotus in the *Histories*, a different author is generally assumed. West (301) dates the life to c. 50–150 AD, largely because the second-century Christian theologian Tatian seems to have read it. Gigante (15–19) enumerates a number of theories, none offering a later date than West; he notes that Bergk thought the *Life* a fourth-century BC work, erroneously attributed to Herodotus by the Alexandrians. Certainly, the epigrams contained within Pseudo-Herodotus' *Life* are mostly quite old, and only a few of them are found elsewhere, which supports the suggestion of an early source. A number of the place-names used (Neon Teichos, Pitys) suggest an acquaintance with Ephorus of Cyme (Gigante 26).

Pseudo-Plutarch (I and II): The first of these, intended as a preface to the *Iliad* (West 305), is strictly a compilation of three sources: Ephorus of Cyme, Aristotle, and the Colophonian tradition as represented by an epigram on a statuary group there. The second Pseudo-Plutarchean *Life* may in fact be by Plutarch himself

(Gigante 55); at any rate, it is no later than the second century AD, and seems to draw on lost Plutarchan material on Homer (Hillgruber).

Proclus: A grammarian active in the second century AD, and tutor to Marcus Aurelius (Jul. Capit. *Vit. Ant.* c. 2). His *Chrestomathy* does not survive intact, but the portion containing his life of Homer survives in various manuscripts of the *Iliad*, including the famous Venetus A. His mocking of the claim that Homer was blind is also found in the Roman historian Velleius Paterculus; both are thought to be drawing on a historian hostile to Ephorus, possibly Timaeus (345–250 BC) (West 306).

Hesychius: A sixth-century AD author of a series of lives of poets, and a major source for the *Suda*, the tenth-century Byzantine encyclopedia.

Vita Romana: Found in the oldest manuscript of the so-called D scholia to Homer, dating from the ninth century AD (West 308).

Vitae Scorialenses (I and II): Found in various manuscripts of the *Iliad*, the earliest from the eleventh century (West 308). All three of these last *Lives* refer to a particularly large number of sources.

3

Lyric Authorship

Poetry, Genre, and the Polis

Where the self-effacement of the epic poet presented considerable challenges to the reverse biographical fallacy, "lyric" poetry, broadly conceived, would seem more fruitful territory.[1] In the case of a poet such as Sappho, for whom the ancients possessed substantial bodies of poetry in which a strongly personal voice was expressed, such was indeed the case, as has already been demonstrated persuasively by others.[2] Clearly, the substantial body of lyric poetry expressing profound emotion was fertile ground for biographical readers. That said, substantial categories of biographical material concerning Archaic Greek lyric poets clearly exceed the reach of naïve biographical criticism. In the latter half of this chapter, I will explore aspects of the biographical accounts of Alcman and Sappho that, I believe, can be explained more usefully in terms of implied poetics than of the biographical fallacy. With Alcman, I will examine the question of his birthplace, whether in Lydia or Sparta; with Sappho, I will consider a

[1] There is no hard-and-fast definition of lyric poetry that will suit all cases, especially in a book that discusses both Greek and Chinese poetry. The original, performance-based, and pragmatic definition of lyric as song sung to the accompaniment of a lyre necessarily excludes forms, such as elegy, that fit modern definitions of lyric as subjective poetry with a speaking subject. At the same time, such modern definitions based on content would exclude poetry admitted by the ancients on the basis of form. For my purposes, I use "lyric" as a broad category to encompass poetry that is neither epic nor dramatic; I also use more specific genre categories such as citharody where appropriate.

[2] Lefkowitz (1981) 25–31; 36–7.

curious episode in Herodotus concerning abusive poetry she is said to have composed on the subject of her sister-in-law.

In making my arguments on these two more famous figures, I will draw on my reading (in the first part of this chapter) of an extreme case of the mismatch of biographical anecdote to poetic text, Terpander. He is representative of a category that might be labeled *virtual poets*, that is, poets to whom no poetry was ever attributed, or none of whose poetry survives to our time, or for whom doubts were cast in ancient times on the meager materials associated with their names. In addition to Terpander, legendary figures of high antiquity such as Orpheus, Linus, Musaeus, and Amphion could be said to belong to this category. In the absence of poetry to read biographically, biographical criticism was of course impossible, and such biographical materials as do survive must therefore have served some other purpose. Indeed, as I will argue, Terpander seems in many ways constructed to create a history, a genealogical lineage providing chronological depth to a poetic genre, citharody. Virtual poets such as Terpander are in most respects placeholders or ciphers; if they did not exist, the history of poetry would have had to invent them.

The details of their stories employ many of the same biographical devices as we have seen with Homer, including birthplace and genealogy, travel, and the death scene, along with new ones such as innovation, performance, and competition. Although these devices are similar to those found with Homer, they are deployed in the service of a wider range of ideological goals. In reading the *Lives of Homer*, which deal with an identifiable and valued corpus, we were able to discover assumptions made about the production and circulation of epic – whether oral or written – and about how epic travels (both how epichoric narratives travel to enter the world of Panhellenic epic, and how those epics then travel around the Hellenic world themselves). In contrast, the implied poetics of biographical anecdotes about Terpander, although they do touch on similar issues, such as how Eastern musical and poetic innovations reach the mainland, have as their greater emphasis the *value* of poetry, and specifically its role in constituting the state.

In doing so, they demonstrate a further benefit to the use of my model of implied poetics, namely that it increases the range of poetics visible to us in a given place and time. If we judge a culture's

poetics on the basis of the great and foundational moments of its poetics alone, we can all too easily be left with a misleading perspective on how the value of poetry was in practice understood. A close examination of the material that survives (and especially scenes of authorship) from either ancient Greece or early China reveals something that ought never to have been in doubt: poetics was in neither culture the exclusive province of one or two commanding figures, but rather was an arena of conflict and debate in which a variety of views were defended, and in which the ultimate victors need not always have been the majority party. I have already discussed, in Chapter 1, the tendency of explicit poetics in Greece to emphasize reenactment, whereas that in China stressed affective expression and the relationship of poetry to the political order. At the same time, I suggested there that even the explicit poetics of each culture left at least some room for ideas resembling those found in the other's repertoire. The biographical anecdotes about Terpander will, I believe, provide further evidence for Greek ideas about the relationship of poetry to the constitution of the state, as well as for the emergence of ideas about poetic change and generic form. The approach I take with Terpander will then serve as something of a paradigm for the work I do with Alcman and Sappho, better-attested and better-known poets. I will show that the biography of Alcman follows much the same pattern as that of Terpander, reflecting the same concerns about the role that poetry should and did play in the Spartan state. When it comes to Sappho, I will show that one of the most early and striking of anecdotes about her allows Herodotus to situate his work within the context of traditional poetic genres of praise and blame.

An important attempt to situate Terpander's role as a virtual poet was found in the work of the fourth century BC philosopher and musical theorist Heraclides Ponticus, and preserved in the treatise *On Music* attributed to Plutarch.[3] This passage claims that citharodic song was invented by Amphion, a son of Zeus, and, with his twin Zethus, one of the founders of Thebes in one version of that story. Heraclides claims

[3] On the attribution to Heraclides Ponticus, see Gibson (2005) 102. Once again, with the *De Musica*, the authorship of a major source of evidence is in doubt. As in the first chapter, I shall refer to the author of this treatise as Pseudo-Plutarch, as if that were a name and not a placeholder for one. There is no reason to connect the Pseudo-Plutarch of this chapter with the two Pseudo-Plutarchs of the previous chapter.

that Amphion was a contemporary of various other mythic figures, each responsible for developing a specific genre – Linus (laments, or *thrênoi*), Anthes (hymns), Pieron ("poems about the Muses" τὰ περὶ τὰς Μούσας ποιήματα), Philammon (founder of the sacred chorus at Delphi), Thamyris (composer of a *Titanomachy*), and the Homeric bards Demodocus and Phemius. Heraclides also establishes a genealogy connecting Amphion, the Homeric bards, Terpander, and Stesichorus as key figures in the history of citharodic song:

> The diction of the poems of the aforesaid poets [sc. Demodocus and Phemius] was not free, nor were they without meter, but they were just like the poems of Stesichorus and the ancient song-makers, who in composing their words set them to these melodies. They say, indeed, that Terpander was the poet of the citharodic modes (*nomoi*), and set melodies to his words and to those of Homer when he sang in competition. And he says that Terpander was the first to state the names of the citharodic *nomoi*.
>
> οὐ λελυμένην δ᾽ εἶναι τῶν προειρημένων τὴν τῶν ποιημάτων λέξιν καὶ μέτρον οὐκ ἔχουσαν, ἀλλὰ καθάπερ τὴν Στησιχόρου τε καὶ τῶν ἀρχαίων μελοποιῶν, οἳ ποιοῦντες ἔπη τούτοις μέλη περιετίθεσαν· καὶ γὰρ τὸν Τέρπανδρον ἔφη κιθαρῳδικῶν ποιητὴν ὄντα νόμων, κατὰ νόμον ἕκαστον τοῖς ἔπεσι τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ καὶ τοῖς Ὁμήρου μέλη περιτιθέντα ᾄδειν ἐν τοῖς ἀγῶσιν· ἀποφῆναι δὲ τοῦτον λέγει ὀνόματα πρῶτον τοῖς κιθαρῳδικοῖς νόμοις· (Pseudo-Plutarch, *De musica* 1132B8-C6 = Heracl. Pont. fr. 157 Wehrli)

Very little material can be assigned to this genre of citharody. Of the poets mentioned here, we have approximately nine short fragments of Terpander (none of them indubitably authentic) and a rather larger but still patchy collection of fragments by Stesichorus, which allows us to understand only a little of his poetic style.[4] Heraclides Ponticus uses the biographical device of genealogy (in a generic rather than a genetic sense) to link a variety of figures whose ontological categories are for us incompatible. Moderns would assign Amphion clearly to the category of myth, along with the others of his generation. Thamyris, Demodocus, and Phemius all make their appearances in Homeric epic, which leaves them in a hinterland between myth and fictionality.

[4] For the fragments, see Bergk (1843[1], 1853[2], 1867[3], 1882[4]); Wilamowitz-Moellendorf (1921); Page, Sir Denys *PMG*; Gostoli (1990b). Elsewhere, I show that none of the fragments attributed to Terpander are likely to be authentic; see Beecroft (2008a). One of the best-known fragments of Stesichorus, the portion of the *Palinode* presented in Plato's *Phaedrus*, forms the subject of Chapter 4.

Many today would claim Terpander as a "historical" figure, though it is not clear what it means to refer to him as such.

I will not concern myself here with whether this passage is a factual account of the history of a poetic and musical genre. Instead, I focus on the purpose served by this genealogy of citharodists; that is, on what we can learn from this passage about Heraclides' understanding of the genre as a whole, and of its relationship to other genres. Heraclides constructs citharody as a genre in history, divinely inspired and developing chronologically, with later poets influenced by earlier ones. Further, citharody is integrated into a network of genres (the *thrênos*, the hymn, choral lyric, and so on), each established at a fixed time (within a generation of musical innovators all alive at the same time) and each, because he associates each founder with his city, in a fixed place (mapping genre theory onto the landscape of the Greek world). A variety of epichoric traditions about foundations of poetry are thus reconciled and integrated into a Panhellenic narrative that uses geography and chronology as structuring elements.

Amphion and Terpander thus form crucial nodes of development for this history of citharody, with Amphion representing the initial development of the form (citharody and citharodic poetry), and Terpander the establishment of citharodic *nomoi*, the musical patterns that regulate the genre. Heraclides Ponticus' narrative represents then, in part, the reconciliation of two versions of the origin of the genre, one tied to Thebes and the other to Sparta. It is the status of both men as founders that organizes the narrative and gives it a purpose; the work produced by the other citharodists is understood as derived from that of these two men. Moreover, the fact that the genre has a double foundation (possibly reflecting differing local traditions) will prove to have important implications for the biographical accounts of both (virtual) poets. In what follows, I examine only the story of Terpander, who differs from Amphion in that at least some poetry was attributed to him in ancient times; we will see that Terpander represents primarily a structural position rather than an identity, and that the content of his biography is generic in quality, in that the same stories can be (and are) told about others.

The structures of hero-cult play an important role in the biographical account of Terpander, who is a culture-hero of musical innovation whose life takes on the dimensions of heroic myth in the epichoric

Spartan context. These links to local hero-cult serve to underscore the generic differences between epic and citharody (genres whose content overlaps); whereas epic assumes a Panhellenic position (and Homeric biography serves as a means of narrativizing that ascent to Panhellenic status), citharody retains an epichoric focus (and citharodic biography embodies that epichoricity through the language of hero-cult).

I have discussed the problematic nature of the fragments attributed to Terpander elsewhere, showing that each of these is best understood as attributed to Terpander in his role as generic founder, rather than *in propria persona*; in what follows, I make a similar argument about his biography.[5] Even the most basic details of Terpander's life – his date and place of birth and his parentage – were, I argue, constructed to suit the implied poetics in which he featured. This is not necessarily to suggest that there is no actual historical figure lurking underneath the evidence. Rather, the material we do have about Terpander's life is, I think, best understood as constructed to account for the development of his genre, not as a record of his life as an individual. The truth-value of these claims about Terpander may remain beyond proof, but they nonetheless have considerable use-value to us as instances of the range of implicit assumptions made about citharodic poetry and its origins, circulation, and value.

I will begin with the biographical device of dating, one related to the devices of birthplace and genealogy I discussed with Homer. The evidence here is fairly complex and technical, so I will anticipate my conclusion: attempts to date Terpander's life are not primarily interested in fixing him within the absolute chronology of Greek history (a chronology that is in any event rather nebulous), but rather in assigning him (and his genre) a relative dating in relationship to other poets (and their genres).

The late fifth century BC writer Hellanicus claimed that Terpander lived in the time of Midas. According to Gostoli, this dating would indicate something in the range of 741–696 BC, if we accept Julius Africanus' dating of Midas' reign.[6] Phanias, writing in the fourth

[5] Beecroft (2008a).

[6] Gostoli IX n4. Note as well her report later that one ancient source (Julius Africanus) puts the death of Midas in 676 (Gostoli XI n13). She rejects this date as too late, but

century, makes Terpander younger than both Lesches of Lesbos and Archilochus.[7] Athenaeus preserves a report, also apparently from Hellanicus, that Terpander was a victor at the first Carneian festival, which Athenaeus claims, following Sosibius, the third-century historian of Sparta, took place in the Twenty-Sixth Olympiad (i.e., between 676 and 673 BC).[8]

Note that in each case, we must rely on multiple sources to connect these relative dates to an absolute chronology – because no source simultaneously provides dates for these external events and links Terpander to them, we cannot be certain that the traditions on which our sources draw are compatible. Second, we must remember that the sources providing us with these clues to Terpander's dates do so for reasons of their own. The evidence from Clement uses the fragment connecting Terpander's life to that of Midas, in conjunction with other evidence from Phanias, to make a claim that Archilochus is in fact older than Terpander, a claim that likely maps chronological priority onto generic preeminence.[9] The link between Terpander and the first poetic competitions at the Carneia is similarly used by Athenaeus to argue that Terpander is older than Anacreon.[10] None of our sources have any great interest in connecting Terpander's life to a specific historical horizon with precision or accuracy; rather, all are making assumptions about relationships among poets and genres, in much the same fashion as we saw with Homer and Hesiod in the previous chapter.

Other sources assert even more problematic claims about Terpander's dating. The Parian marble dates Terpander to the rule of the archon Dropides in Athens, that is, perhaps to 645–643 BC (Gostoli T5). At the other extreme, the third-century peripatetic

it is important to remember that for our purposes the question of greater relevance is not what the date of Midas' death *actually was*, but rather what Hellanicus *believed it to be* (something on which we lack evidence).

7 Gostoli (1990b), Testimonia 2;4 (testimonia from this edition will henceforth be referred to in the form Gostoli T2). Both T2 and T4 are reported in Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* I, 4,131.

8 Gostoli T1 (Athenaeus 14.37.26).

9 Gostoli T2 T4. See also T3, where Glaucus of Rhegium argues that Terpander is older than Archilochus (Pseudo-Plutarch, *De Musica* 1132 e). This question is, of course, analogous to the question of whether Homer or Hesiod is the elder, a question explored in the previous chapter.

10 Gostoli T1.

Hieronymus of Rhodes claims that Terpander may be dated as contemporaneous with the Spartan lawgiver Lycurgus, who, as a co-founder of the Olympic games, can be dated to 776 BC (Gostoli T6). No less confusing are the attempts at relative dating. The first century BC writer Alexander Polyhistor draws a poetic lineage from Terpander to Archilochus through the shadowy figure of Clonas, who was claimed by both the Thebans and the Tegeans (Gostoli T7), whereas Pseudo-Plutarch goes to some length to reject the (for him, absurd) claim that Hipponax is older than Terpander, claiming that even Periclitus, notionally at the end of a tradition of Lesbian *citharôdoi*, is clearly older than Hipponax (Pseudo-Plutarch, *De musica* 1133 cd. = T8, which omits the mention of Periclitus).

These testimonia are most useful if used to aid in our understanding of how Terpander was understood to relate to other poets. Most of these poets, but especially Terpander, Archilochus, and Anacreon, stand at the beginning of particular poetic genres, and thus, given the logic of the biographical device of genealogy, of lineages of lyric poets. Debates about the relative dates of each therefore relate more to the relative primacy and value of each of their genres than they do to chronology. The connection to Midas that we see in Hellanicus is also suggestive; as we saw in the previous chapter, the authorship of Midas' epitaph was a subject of dispute in ancient times, in which it was variously attributed to Cleobulus of Lindos or to Homer. The claim that Terpander and Midas were contemporaries may reflect a claim either that Terpander was the epitaph's author, or at any rate that he and whoever Hellanicus thought was the author were contemporaries. Similarly, the claim that Terpander and Lycurgus were contemporaries reads as an attempt to relate the foundation of Spartan lyric and Spartan musical competition to the foundation of the Spartan constitution.[11] This mishmash of relative dates cannot provide an absolute chronology and is best understood as not having been intended to. The point of the biographical device of relative dating is instead to situate a poet within the development of his genre, and to set his genre in relation to others.

[11] A connection may also be intended to the reception of Homeric epic in Sparta, if we agree with Janko in seeing the account of Creophylus' meeting with Lycurgus as reflecting a genuine Spartan tradition (Janko (1992) 31n50).

The device of birthplace and genealogy, so important in the case of Homer, plays a major role in the story of Terpander as well. Where Homer's birthplace was primarily a question of reconciling divergent epichoric claims to the masterworks of Panhellenic culture, the question of Terpander's birthplace has more to do with the origin and development of musical innovation, and with claims about the suitability of Sparta as a site for such. Most sources agree that Terpander was from Lesbos, without further specifying his city of birth, but the three sources that suggest a city suggest two different cities. Diodorus Siculus tells us that Terpander was from Methymna,[12] whereas the Byzantine lexicon the *Suda* and the earlier scholar Stephanus of Byzantium claim that Terpander was instead from Antissa.[13] Boethius, in his *De musica*, suggests that Terpander, together with his fellow Methymnean Arion, saved the Lesbians and Ionians from a most devastating disease by means of their music.[14] This account seems to anticipate the theme of Terpander's poetry as a socially integrative force, a theme that will assume greater prominence when we follow Terpander to Sparta, as well as making Terpander and Arion doubles of one another. Neither figure is understood here as concrete and individuated, but rather as a structural element in a theory about the value of poetry.

The *Suda* also reports rival birthplace traditions claiming that Terpander was born in Arne (in Boeotia) or in Cyme (in Aeolia).[15] Both of these birthplaces link Terpander to Hesiod: Arne thanks to Hesiod's own birth in Boeotia, and Cyme because Hesiod reports that his father was born there. As we have already seen, the Cymeans seem to have constructed a poetic genealogy that connects Orpheus, Musaeus, Homer, and Hesiod to their city (albeit tangentially in each case); in this context the further connection to Terpander can be understood as part of a larger strategy. Likewise, several sources suggest

[12] Gostoli T15 (Diodorus Siculus 8.28 in Tzetzes' *Chiliada* 1 385–92).

[13] Gostoli T23 (Stephanos Byzantinos p. 101, 1 Meineke), T24 (Suda τ 354). It is unclear in Stephanus whether he is reporting Terpander's Methymnaean origin from Diodorus or not.

[14] Gostoli T22 (Boethius, *De Musica* 1, 1).

[15] Gostoli T24. See also T38 (from Pollux' *Onomasticon* 4,65), where it is claimed that the Aeolian and Boeotian nomoi are named for Terpander's places of origin. Given what we have seen already with respect to Homer in the previous chapter, it is tempting to suggest that Ephorus of Cyme may be the source for the claim that Cyme was Terpander's hometown.

descent from either Hesiod or Homer.[16] It is clear that these genealogies were retrospectively constructed to make concrete and biological the literary genealogies implicit in the prevailing narrative of the development of Greek lyric poetry.[17] To see the motivations that underlie the story of Terpander's Lesbian origin we shall have to proceed to a further study of the evidence on the life and achievements of Terpander.

There are two scenes of authorship that are central to the life of Terpander. The first of these is the story that he was invited to Sparta when that city was in the midst of political strife, and that he brought an end to that strife through a performance of his music. This anecdote is preserved in several versions, one attributed to Demetrius of Phaleron, in an account preserved in the scholia to *Odyssey* 3.267. The Odyssean passage discusses the bard or *aoidos* to whom Agamemnon entrusted his wife while he was fighting the Trojan war:[18]

As when they say that the city of the Spartans had benefited the most from these men, both in terms of unified purpose (ὁμόνοιαν) and in terms of the protection of customs.[19] Thus the Pythian oracle, when they were experiencing strife, told them to listen to the Lesbian singer and to stop their love of quarreling. And so it happened.

. . . ὡς τῶν Σπαρτιατῶν τὴν πόλιν ὠφελεῖσθαι λέγουσιν ὑπὸ τούτων τῶν ἀνδρῶν τὰ μέγιστα καὶ πρὸς ὁμόνοιαν καὶ πρὸς τὴν τῶν νόμων φυλακήν. ὡς καὶ τὴν Πυθώ, αὐτόθι φυομένης ταραχῆς, εἰπεῖν τὸν Λέσβιον ᾠδὸν ἀκούειν καὶ παύσασθαι τῆς φιλονεικίας. ὁ καὶ γέγονεν.

Our scholiast's juxtaposition of Agamemnon's trusting an *aoidos* with the supervision of Clytemnestra and the Lesbian poet's capacity

[16] Gostoli.XII, citing Hesiod Op. 633–40. It is worth noting that Terpander's position in a Hesiodic genealogy would be substantially different if he had been born in Cyme rather than in Arne. See Suda τ 354 for the claimed Homeric and Hesiodic genealogies, and note that if the source for these genealogies is the Cymean tradition, then a Hesiodic genealogy would imply a Homeric genealogy.

[17] On the attempts to link Homer to Hesiod, and both to their poetic predecessors, see Chapter 1. On the genealogical connections proposed between Homer or Hesiod and Stesichorus, see Chapter 4. Here as at most other points in Terpander's story, we find the same anecdotes or their equivalents used for other poets.

[18] Gostoli T12.

[19] Note the parallels between musical and political *nomoi* ("laws/norms", to provide a brief gloss to a complex term). For further information, see *inter alia* Ostwald (1969), especially pp. 75–82 on the use of the term *eunomia* in a Spartan context. Note also the parallel with the Mao school and its equation of musical and political harmony.

to resolve strife through his music is suggestive. Both stories of course suggest that musicians have the capacity to sway political events, but their contexts are radically different. Where the Odyssean narrative is located at court, and seems to suggest that the bard's capacity to control Clytemnestra resides in his position as a figure of respect, the Lesbian poet's powers are located in the context of a mass (if oligarchic) political community and rely more on an innate capacity of music to construct and maintain a community. Ominously for the Lesbian poet of the anecdote, Agamemnon's bard was notoriously unsuccessful in restraining Clytemnestra; the same scholion informs us that she promptly exiled him and began her adulterous relationship with Aegisthus.

This account presents the basic version of the story, confirmed in Heraclides Lembus' excerpts from Aristotle's *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians*.[20] It should be noted that neither of these versions specifically refers to Terpander; both speak instead of a Λέσβιον ᾠδὸν. The connection to Terpander is a plausible inference, although at the same time it is worth observing that what is here emphasized is the structural role of the eastern poet coming to Sparta to calm political strife (a pattern we will see repeated with Alcman), rather than Terpander's individual identity. Two versions do specifically identify Terpander. Philodemus' *De musica*, in a series of fragments, reports the story while questioning whether music that is irrational/without words (ἄλογα μέλη) can halt a dispute that is rooted in logic/words (λογικὴν διαφοράν).[21] In addition, the twelfth century Byzantine poet and grammarian Ioannes Tzetzes provides a poetically embellished version of the basic narrative, fitting the music of Terpander into the life of the Spartan community. Indeed, the language Tzetzes uses to describe the two kinds of harmony overlaps significantly: the *harmonia* of Terpander's song echoes the work he does in fitting back together (*sun-harmozô*) the Spartan polity.[22]

[20] Gostoli T13.

[21] Gostoli T14 a–c.

[22] Gostoli T15, Ioannes Tzetzes, *Chiliades* 1.385–92. On *harmonia* and *sunarmozô*, see 389–91:

> καὶ δή τι μέλος Τέρπανδρος ἐντέχνως κιθαρίσας
> αὐτοὺς πάλιν συνήρμοσε, Διόδωρος ὡς γράφει
> τῆς ἁρμονίας τῇ ᾠδῇ.

This capacity to effect peace and rid the city of ills is a quality shared in the tradition by many foreign poets resident in Sparta As the second century AD Roman historian Aelian tells us:

The Spartans were inexperienced in things to do with the Muses.[23] They concerned themselves with exercise and with weapons. If they ever needed the aid of the Muses, whether they were sick or mentally deranged or were suffering at the public level in any other such way, they sent for foreign men, such as doctors or purifiers according to the Pythian oracle. They also sent for Terpander, Thaletas, Tyrtaeus, Nymphaeus of Cydonia, and Alcman (for he was a Lydian).

Λακεδαιμόνιοι μουσικῆς ἀπείρως εἶχον · ἔμελε γὰρ αὐτοῖς γυμνασίων καὶ ὅπλων. εἰ δέ ποτε ἐδεήθησαν τῆς ἐκ Μουσῶν ἐπικουρίας ἢ νοσήσαντες ἢ παραφρονήσαντες ἄλλο τι τοιοῦτον δημοσίᾳ παθόντες, μετεπέμποντο ξένους ἄνδρας οἷον ἰατροὺς ἢ <καθαρτάς> κατὰ Πυθόχρηστον. μετεπέμψαντό γε μὴν Τέρπανδρον καὶ Θαλήταν καὶ τὸν Κυδωνιάτην Νυμφαῖον καὶ Ἀλκμᾶνα (Λυδὸς γὰρ ἦν). (Aelian, *Varia Historia* 12.50=Gostoli T 21)

From this account, we can see that the story of Terpander's rescue of Sparta from civil discord through his music, far from being a critical element of his personal biography, is in fact a generic element of the constructed biographies of poets at Sparta. As Aelian reminds us, the Greek world outside Sparta (as well as the Spartans themselves) associated that city more with athletics and with military prowess than with musical skill (a point we shall return to when we examine Alcman). The accuracy of this assessment, which certainly ignores the very substantial record of archaic lyric associated with Sparta, is not especially important here. For my purposes, interested in the implicit poetics of the passage rather than in its historical accuracy, what matters of course is how Sparta was represented, rather than what it actually was. The presence, then, of vibrant and complex song-culture traditions in Sparta was explained in terms of foreign imports, using the biographical device of travel to represent the transfer of poetic

This account can be compared to the achievement of Amphion in building the walls of Thebes with his lyre (for which see Pausanias 2.6.4, a reference to the sixth century BC epicist Asius). Where Amphion constructs his community with his music in a literal sense, Terpander does so in a more abstract sense.

[23] Although *mousikê* could more straightforwardly be translated as "music," I use this circumlocution to emphasize that Aelian is here characterizing alike under this rubric the work of doctors, ritual specialists, and poets.

practices from one place to another. The poetics implicit here (which we shall also see operative in accounts of Alcman) is clearly neither accurate, nor indigenous to the local context of Sparta; rather, it represents a Panhellenic attempt to represent Sparta as a consumer, rather than a producer, of culture.

Terpander is also associated in many sources with the addition of three strings to the traditional four strings of the lyre.[24] This innovation is another generic narrative associated with Terpander; we find credit for the same task being given to Hermes (*HHom* 4.51) and to the mortals Amphion, Orpheus, and Linus (all Plin. *H.N.* 7.204), as well as various accounts of the further refinement of the instrument by others, including Terpander.[25] In any event, all these narratives are likely wrong, because seven-stringed lyres are attested to in the archeological record in Mycenean and Minoan times.[26] Central to this narrative, to whomever it is connected, is the representation of Spartan ambivalence about musical innovation. Whether it is Terpander or another poet who engages in this musical innovation in Sparta, the punishment is the same: the superfluous lyre-strings are cut off.[27] This narrative has the function of explaining how musical developments associated

[24] (Strabo 13.2.4.24; Cleonid. *Harm.*12; Anatolius, Peri *dekados kai ton entos autes arithmon* 12.22; Clem. Al. *Strom.* vi.16.144). For a further discussion, see Beecroft (2008a).

[25] NB the Boethius passage above, where named individuals are said to have added the fifth (Coroebus, son of Atys, king of Lydia), sixth (Hyagnis), and seventh (Terpander) strings to the lyre. This version is particularly striking in that it attributes the addition of the new strings, respectively, to a Lydian, a Phrygian, and a Lesbian who worked in the Doric world. The elegance of this pattern seems programmatic rather than historical. A structural parallel is found in the Chinese account of the development of longer line-lengths and more complex verse-forms. The poems in the *Canon of Songs* are mostly in four-character lines, whereas later poetry prefers five- and seven-character lines. A late account extends the development back into high antiquity, incorporating spurious poems attributed to the reign of the Yellow Emperor and other legendary rulers, in verse forms as brief as two characters, thus allowing the whole development of Chinese verse forms to appear as a continuous evolution. This account is developed fully in a late fifth century AD treatise on literature, the *Wenxin Diaolong* 文心雕龍, by Liu Xie 劉勰 (Chapter 29, "Continuity and Mutation" 通變). For a translation and discussion of the passage, see Owen (1992), pp. 226–7.

[26] Aign (1963).

[27] See *Suda* γ 315 for this story. The account of Terpander's death, which I discuss below, represents a further variation on this theme.

with the East reached Greece,[28] along with the secondary function of resolving the anxiety surrounding how the Spartans, understood as arch-conservative in all things, could at the same time have had so innovative a role in the development of Greek song-culture.[29]

The representation of Terpander must, accordingly, express both of these contradictory attitudes. He must be represented as from Lesbos, must fulfill the role of a culture-hero in bringing the seven-stringed lyre and citharodic poetry to Sparta – but also must be represented as having been punished by the Spartans for his innovation by having his superfluous lyre-strings removed. Whatever the historical realities surrounding the emergence of citharodic poetry in Sparta, what we know of Terpander is best understood as a retrospective mythologizing of the situation, as the personification of a process. Whoever Terpander may or may not have been in life, in the textual tradition he is primarily the embodiment of the acquisition of Eastern musical knowledge and practices by the Spartans, and in this role he can be replaced in whole or in part by a number of other figures. Further, these anecdotes seem designed to establish parallels between the harmony of the state and the harmony of the choral festival performance (though Philodemus' arguments show the existence of opposing views).

These anecdotes suggest a possible Greek poetics, differing from the explicit version most familiar from Aristotle, and bearing a strong resemblance to Chinese traditions (see also Chapter 1). Especially striking are the implicit differences in the relationship between poetry and the state in the Terpander narrative and in Plato. Where Plato is more concerned with the capacity of poetry to harm the state and to act as an impetus to private rather than public pursuits, these accounts of Terpander's role in Sparta offer a more optimistic view, one in which

[28] See, e.g. Ap. *Fl.* 3; Nonn. *D.* 41.372–6; *AP* 9.266 (Antip. Thess.); Ath. *Deip.* 14.18.40 for discussion of the claim that Hyagnis developed the *aulos* and was responsible for its importation from Phrygia to the Greek world.

[29] See Plu. *Inst. Lac.* 17 for the story that the ephors fined Terpander and nailed up his cithara because he had added an extra string to it. That this is another generic anecdote is shown by the fact that Plutarch describes an extremely similar anecdote concerning Timotheus in the same paragraph. See also Plu. *Ap. Lac.* 200c5 for another similar anecdote, this time involving Phrynis. In Chapter 5, I discuss similar claims made about musical innovation in early China, also with an epichoric dimension.

poetry can change the state in positive as well as negative ways (even if the poets responsible may suffer personally for their efforts). In this context, in which we can see a range of views on poetry and the state in both Greece and China, I would resist simply making equivalent the implied poetics of the Terpander narrative and the explicit poetics of the Mao preface. As we shall see in the last three chapters of the book, perhaps the biggest difference lies in the political goals poetry is said to promote. The Terpander narrative shows a foreign tradition brought through the device of travel to restore harmony to an epichoric political order, whereas at least in the cosmopolitan version of the Confucian tradition (where the very concept of epichoric culture is troubling) epichoric political disorder is a symptom of chaos at the panchoric level, and the political integration sought from poetry is not to bring peace to the city, but to restore the Zhou kingdom to its origins.

Death-stories are especially likely to be sites of implicit poetic work, because by definition they cannot be found within a poet's work by biographical-critical techniques.[30] The strange story of Terpander's death is another case in which what seems like an idiosyncratic biographical narrative turns out to be a generic episode with an implicit poetic agenda; our sources tell us that someone caused Terpander to choke by tossing a fig into his mouth as he opened his mouth to sing, possibly at the *Skiades*, the "Shady Places" or tents where Spartan men ate for nine days during the Carneia festival.[31] Similar stories are told of two other poets, Sophocles and Anacreon; Sophocles is said to choke on a grape, and Anacreon on a grape-seed.[32] We have several brief citations of this account of Sophocles' death, but the *Vita Sophoclis* adds an intriguing point of connection to the death of Terpander, because it also sets Sophocles' "death by fruit" at a festival, the Choes, that was the second day of the Anthesteria festival at Athens, a festival at which dramatic performances took place.[33] The consumption of

[30] See Beecroft (2010) for a discussion of the death of Homer and the extent to which that death-narrative becomes the site for an implicit poetics of blindness and literacy.

[31] *Suda* γ 315; Anth. Pal. 9.488 εὐφόρμιγγα κρέκων Σκιάδεσσιν ἀοιδάν, that is, "Playing a beautifully-lyred song in the Shady Places (*Skiades*)."

[32] For Sophocles, see Sotades fr. 11 Diehl; Anth. Pal. 7.20; Simonides 105, *Vit. Soph.* 55–8. For Anacreon, see Valerius Maximus *De dictis factisque memorabilibus* 9.12.

[33] On the Carneia and Anthesteria, see Burkert (1985) 234–6 and 237–42 respectively. This is just one of several accounts of Sophocles' death; see Lefkowitz (1981)

grapes (actually raisins preserved from the previous autumn) seems to have been traditional at the Choes;[34] although we have no direct evidence that figs were part of the ritual meals served at the Carneia in Sparta, they may well have so featured, in which case both the Terpander and Sophocles death-by-fruit narratives would have as their instruments of death components of the ritual meals at festivals in which poetry or music was performed.

Anecdotes about Terpander, then, owe far more to the general patterns of hero-cult than they do to, for example, the biographical fallacy. The name of Terpander served a useful and significant function in the history of lyric; what the Hellenic world lacked for Terpander was a sizeable body of poetry and a biography. Because the absence of poetry made it difficult to concoct naively biographical readings, the anecdotes our sources relate seem instead to derive from their authors' assumptions about poetry, making use of a series of conventional patterns and episodes. Terpander's dates, paternity, and place of birth are invariably configured to insert him easily into a preexisting narrative about the history of lyric; other, more personal anecdotes, such as those surrounding his alleged musical innovations and his death, are clearly generic in character, all being found with reference to other poets as well. In particular, the striking story of Terpander's death has precise parallels in the traditions surrounding Sophocles and Anacreon and strong structural similarities to elements in the death-stories of Aesop, Archilochus, Homer, and Socrates. In particular, the links between Terpander's musical innovations at the Carneia, his alleged foundation of the musical competitions there, and his death in that competitive festival context suggest the pattern of a culture-hero, punished for his innovations in myth, but celebrated for them in ritual.

The techniques I have described above – the biographical devices of birthplace, dating, genealogy, death, and so on – are all clearly of great use when it comes to writing the life of a poet who either writes in an impersonal style (Homeric epic) or has little or no poetry attached

85–6. Note that, even with an indisputably "real" author such as Sophocles, the *Lives* preserve highly dubious and fictionalized anecdotes.

34 For visual evidence on grapes at the Anthesteria, see van Hoorn (1951) 43 and plates 252, 305, 251, 249, 250, and 339.

to his name (Terpander). These examples have thus been useful for establishing a general methodological approach. But what of poets whose work is more personal, and thus easier to read biographically? In what follows, I will examine anecdotes about Alcman and Sappho, subjecting them to the same approach I have taken thus far, and will demonstrate that my method of searching for implied poetics can yield useful insights in both cases, even with Sappho, perhaps the ancient poet whose work is most consistently read in biographical terms.

There are of course a great many lyric poets to whom I could apply the approach I have taken above with Terpander, each of whom has a considerable biographic tradition. The proper study of all of the anecdotes for all of these poets would be a book in and of itself. To simplify my task here, I omit discussion both of those anecdotes that *are* clearly biographical readings of specific poems, and also those anecdotes that connect poetry to specific historical events. With this latter category, whether the impulse to make the connection is organic with the poetry or not, the techniques employed are distinct from those I wish to study here.

I will confine myself, then, in what remains of this chapter to two out of the nine lyric poets who became canonical in the Hellenistic era, Alcman and Sappho; a third of these nine, Stesichorus, forms the subject of the next chapter. I choose these poets not only because they are among the most important of the lyric poets, but also because they are traditionally considered among the oldest, and thus the farthest removed from the era of history narrated by Herodotus and his generation. Although they cannot be separated from the historical record altogether (Alcman's poetry, frequently martial in content, must have political overtones, and Sappho is thought to be a contemporary of Alcaeus, and thus of the tyrant Pittacus), there is nonetheless a qualitative difference between the relationships these three have to the historical record and that of Anacreon or Ibycus at the court of Polycrates of Samos in the late sixth century, of Simonides in Athens at the time of Thermopylae and of his nephew Bacchylides, and of Pindar, many of whose poems discuss named and known individuals enjoying athletic victories in known years.[35] These latter poets are all tied to

[35] A similar case could be made in part for Archilochus, principally an elegiac and iambic poet, strongly associated with the settlement of Thasos.

reasonably well documented historical events, and it is not surprising that their biographical narratives should connect to those events. Alcman and Sappho (and Stesichorus) are figures from more shadowy historical contexts, and it is their lives that form the most fruitful venue for my discussion. In what follows, I make no attempt to be comprehensive, hoping rather in each case to demonstrate the usefulness of my approach with respect to at least one area of each poet's biographical materials.

Alcman: The Eastern Spartan, Redux

I begin with Alcman, and with the problem of his birthplace, a controversy reminiscent of the issues we have seen with Terpander:

Alcman: A Laconian from Messoa,[36] but according to Crates (erroneously), a Lydian from Sardis. A lyric poet, the son of Damas or of Titaros. Born in the Twenty-Seventh Olympiad (672–669 BC), when Ardys, the father of Alyattes, was King of Lydia.[37] And being altogether erotic, he was the founder of erotic poetry. Of slave origin. He wrote six books, songs and *The Diving Women*.[38] He was the first to introduce singing in nonhexametric poetry. He used the Doric dialect, as the Lacedaemonians do. And there is also another Alcman, one of the lyricists, who was born in Messenia. The plural is *Alkmânes*.

Ἀλκμάν· Λάκων ἀπὸ Μεσσόας· κατὰ δὲ τὸν Κράτητα πταίοντα Λυδὸς ἐκ Σάρδεων· λυρικὸς, υἱὸς Δάμαντος ἢ Τιτάρου. ἦν δὲ ἐπὶ τῆς κζ' Ὀλυμπιάδος, βασιλεύοντος Λυδῶν Ἄρδυος, τοῦ Ἀλυάττου πατρός· καὶ ὢν ἐρωτικὸς πάνυ εὑρετὴς γέγονε τῶν ἐρωτικῶν μελῶν. ἀπὸ οἰκετῶν δέ· ἔγραψε βιβλία ἓξ, μέλη καὶ Κολυμβώσας. πρῶτος δὲ εἰσήγαγε τὸ μὴ ἑξαμέτροις μελῳδεῖν. κέχρηται δὲ Δωρίδι διαλέκτῳ, καθάπερ Λακεδαιμόνιοι. ἔστι δὲ καὶ ἕτερος Ἀλκμὰν, εἷς τῶν λυρικῶν, ὃν ἤνεγκεν ἡ Μεσσήνη. καὶ τὸ πληθυντικὸν Ἀλκμᾶνες. (*Sud.* α 1289)

The most important fact about Alcman's birthplace, then, is that it is in *either* Lydia *or* Lacedemonia; as we shall see, our sources may take sides in this debate, but they can never leave it aside. And as we have seen in looking at Terpander, the general reason for this

[36] According to Strabo (8.5.3.2), one of the villages of which the city of Sparta proper was composed.

[37] A problematic detail, because Alyattes was Ardys' grandson, not his son. See Davison (1968) 178.

[38] It is unclear whether *The Diving Women* (the *Kolumbôsai*) is to be included among the six books, or is a separate work, a point which need not concern us here.

debate seems clear enough; the later Greek tradition found it difficult to believe that the Spartans had been capable of producing a great poet.[39] The Lydian origin, like the similar origin for Terpander, fulfils a Panhellenic narrative in which great poets circulate from city-state to city-state (often, indeed, as also with Ibycus, Anacreon, and Simonides, from the eastern fringes of the Hellenic world to centers of political and economic power), a narrative that of course further legitimates the circulation of the *poetry* associated with their names. The Spartan origin, by contrast, offers a solid epichoric connection, affirming Alcman as a specifically Spartan poet, with a specifically Spartan agenda. An interesting detail is the mention of the second Alcman, from Messenia, who may well represent an attempt by the tradition to reconcile the Lydian and Peloponnesian origins of Alcman by assigning them to two separate people.[40] The *Suda* does not provide a source for the Spartan claim, but attributes the Lydian claim to Crates of Mallos, the second century BC critic (a term he invented) who was active at Pergamon in Asia Minor. Crates himself, as we will see, may have derived his own claim from Aristotle.[41] The debate over which place can claim Alcman's origin continues to rage in some quarters, with slender evidence on each side; rather than contributing to that debate, it might be more useful to reflect further on *why* the debate emerged.[42]

The poetics implicit in the *Suda* are made explicit elsewhere:

> Our wonder moves on from the role of times to that of cities. The single city of Attica had by far more eloquence than all of Greece in its writings, so long as it flourished, to the extent that, when the body of Greece's peoples was

[39] Although note, as Calame reminds us, that Plutarch, for example does not include Alcman in his list of musical innovators punished by the Spartans at *Agis* 10.6. Calame (1983) XVII n12; see also Beecroft (2008a) 235.

[40] For this practice as applied to Sappho, see Lidov (2002) 229. NB the famous anecdote claiming that Sappho fell hopelessly in love with Phaon of Mytilene and, in despair, threw herself off the white cliffs at Leucates. Certain readers of Sappho invented "another" Sappho, also from Lesbos, to whom the story could more suitably be attached (see *Suda* σ 108).

[41] What role might have been played in Crates' belief that Alcman was Lydian by the fact that he was himself from Cilicia and was active in Pergamon must remain a matter of speculation.

[42] For the debate, see Calame (1983) XV n7, with bibliography.

divided into other states, you would think that the capacity [for eloquence] was enclosed by the Athenian walls themselves. Nor does it amaze me more that no orator, Argive, Theban, Lacedaimonian, was thought worthy, while living, of authority, or after his death, of memory. These outstanding cities were barren of others of such zeal (*studium*), unless the single mouth of Pindar made Thebes bright, for the Laconians falsely lay claim to Alcman.

Transit admiratio ab conditione temporum et ad urbium. Una urbs Attica pluribus omnis eloquentiae quam universa Graecia operibus usque floruit adeo ut corpora gentis illius separata sint in alias civitates, ingenia vero solis Atheniensium muris clausa existimes. Neque hoc ego magis miratus sim quam neminem Argivum Thebanum Lacedaemonium oratorem aut dum vixit auctoritate aut post mortem memoria dignum existimatum. Quae urbes eximiae alias talium studiorum fuere steriles, nisi Thebas unum os Pindari inluminaret: nam Alcmana Lacones falso sibi vindicant. (Velleius Paterculus 1.18)

The Roman historian Velleius Paterculus (active in the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius) makes these observations in the context of a larger discussion of the tendency for each art to be at its peak during a surprisingly short period of time. This chronological restriction of greatness is then equated to the preeminence of Athens in the arts, making what I would identify as a typically cosmopolitan gesture of equating one epichoric element of the panchoric system (here, Athens) with the whole, and making that version of the whole a standard by which the present should be measured.[43] Omitting mention of most of the canonical lyric poets, Velleius Paterculus accumulates cultural capital on Athens, allowing only Thebes the (admittedly considerable) honor of being the birthplace of Pindar (whose work as an epinician poet for hire made him the Panhellenic lyricist *par excellence* in any event). The narrative of which Velleius is a part here has much larger implications, contributing obviously to our contemporary tendency to equate Athens with the whole of Greek civilization; the denial of Spartan origin to Alcman, combined with silence on his possible Lydian origin, is but one element in a larger story.

Papyrus finds have enriched our understanding of the debates around Alcman's origin. One papyrus suggests that it was traditional

[43] See, for example, the importance of the state of Lu (Confucius' home state) for the cosmopolitan scholars and exegetes of the Han, an issue that I discuss in more detail in Chapter 7.

for Sparta to hire foreigners to teach the choruses of young men and women who played such a large role in the public life of the city:

> As the Lacedaemonians had then
> Established him, though a Lydian, to be
> The teacher for their daughters
> And the young men for the
> Choruses of their fatherland, . . .
> Never to compete for a prize
> And even now they use a foreigner
> As a teacher of the choruses
> For if in their wisdom they
> Made him a citizen . . .
> There is a charge against him
> In his songs Alcman
> Also says that he is a barbarian
> And a Lydian, *huperl* . . .
>
> ὡς Λακεδα[ι]μόνιοι τότ[ε
> ἐπέστησαν Λυδὸν ὄντα
> διδάσκαλον τῶν θυγατέ
> ρων καὶ ἐφή[βω]ν πατρίο[ις
> χοροῖς το [· · ·]· των [ἀ
> γωνίσασθα[ι δ]ὲ μηδέπω
> [καὶ νῦν ἔτι [ξε]νικῶι κέχρη[ν
> ται διδασκάλωι χο[ρῶν.
> γ]ὰρ εἰ διὰ [τ]ὴν σοφία[ν πο
> λίτην ἐπ[ο]ιήσαντο [
> ἐστιν ἑα[υ]τοῦ κατη[γορεῖν·
> η τοῖς ἄ[ισ]μασι τὸν [Ἄλκμᾶ
> να καὶ λέγειν ὅτι βά[ρβαρος
> ἦν καὶ Λυδὸς ὑπερλ
>
> *P Oxy.* 2506 fr. 1 (c)= T5
> Calame, lines 30–43:[44]

Another fragment[45] informs us that Aristotle thought Alcman was a Lydian, thus confirming that this theory was known in the fourth century BC:[46]

[44] Calame (1997) 226–7 notes that, although the papyrus itself dates to the second century AD, the commentary preserved on it is likely much older.

[45] P. Oxy. 2389 fr. 9. col. I. 11–13 = Calame fr. 8 T IV.

[46] I use square brackets in the following translation to indicate approximately what is missing or conjectured in the published text of the fragment.

But it is likely that Aristotle and his [su]pporters err in [thin]king Alcman to be Lydian [. . .] "He is not a rustic man, nor maladroit . . . "

ἀλλ᾽ ἔοικε Λυδὸν αὐ
τὸν νομί]ζειν ὅ τε Ἀριστοτέλης καὶ
[σύ]μψηφοι ἀπατηθέντες
[ ] ἀνὴρ ἀγρεῖος οὐδ[ὲ
σκαιὸς {κτλ.}]

The end of this fragment fairly clearly represents the beginning of a fragment of Alcaean poetry, already known to us from other sources:[47]

He is not a rustic man, nor
Maladroit, nor among the
Unwise, nor of Thessalian stock,
Nor an Erysichaean shepherd,
But a man from high Sardis.

οὐκ ἦς ἀνὴρ ἀγρεῖος οὐ-
δὲ σκαιὸς οὐδὲ †παρὰ σοφοῖ-
σιν† οὐδὲ Θεσσαλὸς γένος,
Ἐρυσιχαῖος οὐδὲ ποιμήν,
ἀλλὰ Σαρδίων ἀπ᾽ ἀκρᾶν
(Alcman 8 Calame)

Calame, along with many others,[48] argues that the papyrus fragment quoted above proves that Aristotle is committing the biographical fallacy in his reading of this passage, mistakenly assuming that the "man from high Sardis" of the fragment is a self-reference to Alcman, instead of a figure linked to the girls performing the song of which this fragment is a part. This is, of course a possible reading, but there are difficulties with it. To begin with, because we only know Aristotle's opinion through this papyrus find, we cannot be certain whether he offered our fragment 8 as evidence or not, much less whether he found it compelling as such. Frustratingly, one of the lacunae in the papyrus covers the connection its author made between Aristotle's claim that Alcman was Lydian and the quotation of fr. 8 Calame. Further, although the Alcman fragment quoted here is all we know of

[47] Calame (1983) 357–8.
[48] See, for example, Davison (1968) 173–5, Pfeiffer (1968) 241, Broggiato (2001) 242.

the poem, Aristotle may have known it as part of a complete poem, or at least as part of a larger excerpt from the whole.[49] If so, Aristotle will have had the opportunity to interpret these lines in light of their context; if Calame is right about that context, the naïve biographical reading will have been less likely. Finally, it seems worth noting that we have three other sources for this fragment, none of whom report it as a contribution to the debate about Alcman's origin,[50] nor is it adduced as evidence on either side in other sources debating the question. As such, we can only conjecture as to Aristotle's reasons for thinking Alcman to be from Lydia, and to assume that he is merely reading this fragment biographically falls under my rubric of the "reverse biographical fallacy."

I would argue instead that Aristotle might more plausibly have understood Alcman's role in Sparta in a manner similar to that we have seen others apply to Terpander; that is, as a musical innovator who, as such, and according to familiar prejudices, could hardly be of Spartan origin.[51] We know from surviving works of Aristotle's that he was skeptical about the Spartans' musical abilities, claiming, for example, that they failed once they had gained power because they know nothing of leisure-time activities (*Politics* 1271b5).[52] More specifically, in the context of his discussion of the ideal form of education in the *Politics*, Aristotle notes that the Spartan system omits musical training (although, curiously, he informs us that the Spartans are nonetheless skilled in evaluating music made by others) (1339a41–b4).

On the basis of these and other passages, Aristotle seems to have been amongst those who saw the Spartans as without musical and

[49] Davison (1968) 175 thinks not, though the matter is beyond proof.

[50] See fr. 8 T I-III Calame. Briefly, T I (Steph. Byz. s. v. Ἐρυσίχη (p. 281. 10 ss Meineke) discusses the correct form for the gentilic adjective for residents of Erysichê. T II (Strabo 10.2.22) cites the last two lines as evidence for the existence of Erysichê in Acarnania (in western Greece), whereas T III (Chrysipp. *Dial.* 180.21 (II p. 57.20ss von Arnim), which deals with affirmative and negative sentences, quotes only the first two lines of our fragment.

[51] This approach is also hinted at by Davison (1968) 173, who offers two reasons that Aristotle might have thought Alcman to have been Lydian: both the biographical fallacy argument cited above, and the reluctance of fourth-century and later Greeks to accept the cultural achievements of Archaic Sparta, given what they knew of the city. This option, which Davison places first, has been given insufficient attention, I believe, in the literature.

[52] ἀπώλλυντο δὲ ἄρξαντες διὰ τὸ μὴ ἐπίστασθαι σχολάζειν.

poetic skills.[53] At the same time, in emphasizing that the Spartans were just as capable of *appreciating* good music as anyone else, Aristotle here seems to reinforce the argument that Sparta imported its poets. As such, it would hardly be surprising if Aristotle were inclined to accept Alcman's putative Lydian origin, and to add him to the already considerable number of poets (including Terpander) said to have made the journey westward to Sparta. Rather than assume that Aristotle was naïvely misreading Alcman's poetry, we might consider the possibility that he was instead accepting a theory of Alcman's origin that suited his general assumptions and prejudices about the role of literature and music in Sparta. The putative foreign origin of poets such as Alcman and Terpander may have served a function in the epichoric Spartan context (narrativizing the connections between local lyric traditions and Panhellenic epic and lyric from Asia Minor); within the Panhellenic cultural economy of Aristotle's time, the same story represented Sparta's role as a military power lacking in its own cultural institutions and needing to import culture from more advanced centers. As Velleius Paterculus reminds us, this Panhellenic narrative also had the virtue, from the Athenian standpoint, of bolstering their own epichoric claim to have been the heirs and continuation, in the fifth and fourth centuries, of the greatness of Archaic Greek culture.

Sappho

There is no doubt that the lyric poet whose life inspired the most biographical energy was Sappho. The only woman among the nine canonical lyricists (and one of the very few named women poets in all of ancient Greek literature), and a poet whose works are suffused with intensely felt human emotions, Sappho clearly made an irresistible target for naïve biographical criticism, as Lefkowitz and others have pointed out.[54] Most obviously, the women named in Sapphic poetry are explained as "friends" or "pupils" of Sappho. Thus, the woman named Gongyla, whose name appears in fragments 95, 215, S260

[53] As Thucydides 1.10.2 attests, the disproportion between Spartan political power and cultural prestige (here measured in terms of monuments) was already a familiar trope, and the cautious Thucydides is careful to remind us that it need not suggest that Sparta was any the weaker for its architectural timorousness.

[54] Lefkowitz (1981) 36–7.

(and likely in fr. 22), is identified as Sappho's pupil (μαθήτρια) in the biographical entry on her in the *Suda* (σ 107). Such references, of course, invite biographical readings of one kind or another, even today.[55]

Not all anecdotes about Sappho lend themselves so obviously to such a reading, however. A major example is the strange story of Sappho, her brother Charaxus, and his beloved Rhodopis, related to us by Herodotus:

[The Pharaoh Mucerinus] left behind a pyramid much smaller than that of his father (i.e., Cheops), four-sided and 280 feet on each side, with the lower half of Ethiopian stone. Some of the Greeks say that it was built for Rhodopis,[56] a female companion, but they speak incorrectly. These men seem to me truly to say this not knowing who Rhodopis is because they wouldn't say that she had put up so large a pyramid, which cost, so to speak, uncountable thousands of talents, added to which Rhodopis was at her peak under the rule of Amasis, not of Mucerinus.[57] A great many years later than these kings who left behind such these pyramids there was Rhodopis, born from Thracian stock, a slave of Iadmon the son of Hephaestopolis, a man from Samos. She was a fellow-slave of Aesop the story-teller (*logopoios*), for he too was a slave of Iadmon, as the following makes fully clear: when the Delphians sent out many heralds, because of a prophecy that wished to exact a penalty for the life of Aesop (who had been murdered), no one else showed up for it except another Iadmon, the grandson of our Iadmon.

Thus Aesop also belonged to Iadmon. Rhodopis arrived in Egypt to work, having been brought there by Xanthes of Samos, but was freed for a lot of money by a man from Mytilene (on Lesbos) named Charaxus, son of Scamadronymus and brother of the music-maker (*mousopoios*) Sappho. So Rhodopis was freed and remained in Egypt and, because she was very appealing, she acquired a lot of money, sufficient to be Rhodopis, but not for so great a pyramid. Even now it's possible for anyone who wishes to see what one-tenth of her wealth was, and it isn't necessary to attribute great wealth to her. Rhodopis was eager to leave behind a monument to herself in Greece, making an offering that had never been invented by anyone else or offered in a temple, and so she

55 For example, Calame (1997) 250 sees Gongyla as in a homoerotic bond with Gorgo, whom he sees as the leader of a "circle" rival to Sappho's; Gentili (1988) 84–5 sees her as an especially close member of Sappho's *thiasos* or (for Gentili) sacralized homoerotic initiation-group.

56 The name, quite transparently, means "Redface."

57 This is a nontrivial quibble: Mucerinus (Menkaure) reigned during the Fourth Dynasty, c. 2500 BC, whereas Amasis (570–526 BC) was of the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty.

dedicated at Delphi a memorial to herself. With a tenth of her wealth she had made roasting-spits for oxen, all of iron, as many as she could with a tenth of her wealth, and sent them to Delphi. Even now, they are heaped up behind the altar established by the Chians, and opposite the shrine itself. The courtesans of Naucratis are somehow especially appealing to those who love them, because this woman whom our story concerns became so famous that all the Greeks learned her name, and then again later on there was this woman named Archidice, who was the object of song throughout Greece, though she was less the talk of the town than the preceding woman. And so when Charaxus freed Rhodopis, he took her back home to Mytilene, and Sappho mocked him mercilessly in song.[58] And now I've finished talking about Rhodopis.

Πυραμίδα δὲ καὶ οὗτος κατελίπετο ποδῶν καταδέουσαν κῶλον ἕκαστον τριῶν πλέθρων, ἐούσης τετραγώνου, λίθου δὲ ἐς τὸ ἥμισυ αἰθιοπικοῦ. Τὴν δὴ μετεξέτεροί φασι Ἑλλήνων Ῥοδώπιος ἑταίρης γυναικὸς εἶναι, οὐκ ὀρθῶς λέγοντες. Οὐδὲ ὧν οὐδὲ εἰδότες μοι φαίνονται λέγειν οὗτοι ἥτις ἦν ἡ Ῥοδῶπις (οὐ γὰρ ἄν οἱ πυραμίδα ἀνέθεσαν ποιήσασθαι τοιαύτην, ἐς τὴν ταλάντων χιλιάδες ἀναρίθμητοι ὡς λόγῳ εἰπεῖν ἀναισίμωνται), πρὸς δὲ ὅτι κατὰ Ἄμασιν βασιλεύοντα ἦν ἀκμάζουσα Ῥοδῶπις, ἀλλ᾽ οὐ κατὰ τοῦτον. Ἔτεσι γὰρ κάρτα πολλοῖσι ὕστερον τούτων τῶν βασιλέων τῶν τὰς πυραμίδας ταύτας λιπομένων ἦν Ῥοδῶπις, γενεὴν μὲν ἀπὸ Θρηίκης, δούλη δὲ ἦν Ἰάδμονος τοῦ Ἡφαιστοπόλιος ἀνδρὸς Σαμίου, σύνδουλος δὲ Αἰσώπου τοῦ λογοποιοῦ. Καὶ γὰρ οὗτος Ἰάδμονος ἐγένετο, ὡς διέδεξε τῇδε οὐκ ἥκιστα· ἐπείτε γὰρ πολλάκις κηρυσσόντων Δελφῶν ἐκ θεοπροπίου ὃς βούλοιτο ποινὴν τῆς Αἰσώπου ψυχῆς ἀνελέσθαι, ἄλλος μὲν οὐδεὶς ἐφάνη, Ἰάδμονος δὲ παιδὸς παῖς ἄλλος Ἰάδμων ἀνείλετο.

Οὕτω καὶ Αἴσωπος Ἰάδμονος ἐγένετο. Ῥοδῶπις δὲ ἐς Αἴγυπτον ἀπίκετο Ξάνθεω τοῦ Σαμίου κομίσαντός μιν, ἀπικομένη δὲ κατ᾽ ἐργασίην ἐλύθη χρημάτων μεγάλων ὑπὸ ἀνδρὸς Μυτιληναίου Χαράξου τοῦ Σκαμανδρωνύμου παιδός, ἀδελφεοῦ δὲ Σαπφοῦς τῆς μουσοποιοῦ. Οὕτω δὴ ἡ Ῥοδῶπις ἐλευθερώθη καὶ κατέμεινέ τε ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ καὶ κάρτα ἐπαφρόδιτος γενομένη μεγάλα ἐκτήσατο χρήματα ὡς ἅλις εἶναι Ῥοδώπι, ἀτὰρ οὐκ ὥς γε ἐς πυραμίδα τοιαύτην ἐξικέσθαι. Τῆς γὰρ τὴν δεκάτην τῶν χρημάτων ἰδέσθαι ἔστι ἔτι καὶ ἐς τόδε παντὶ τῷ βουλομένῳ, οὐδὲν δεῖ μεγάλα οἱ χρήματα ἀναθεῖναι. Ἐπεθύμησε γὰρ Ῥοδῶπις μνημήιον ἑωυτῆς ἐν τῇ Ἑλλάδι καταλιπέσθαι, ποίημα ποιησαμένη τοῦτο τὸ μὴ τυγχάνοι ἄλλῳ ἐξευρημένον καὶ ἀνακείμενον ἐν ἱρῷ, τοῦτο δὴ ἀναθεῖναι ἐς Δελφοὺς μνημόσυνον ἑωυτῆς. Τῆς ὧν δεκάτης τῶν χρημάτων ποιησαμένη ὀβελοὺς βουπόρους πολλοὺς σιδηρέους, ὅσον ἐνεχώρεε ἡ δεκάτη οἱ, ἀπέπεμπε ἐς Δελφούς· οἳ καὶ νῦν ἔτι συννενέαται ὄπισθε μὲν τοῦ βωμοῦ τὸν Χῖοι ἀνέθεσαν, ἀντίον δὲ αὐτοῦ τοῦ νηοῦ. Φιλέουσι δέκως ἐν τῇ Ναυκράτι ἐπαφρόδιτοι γίνεσθαι αἱ ἑταῖραι. Τοῦτο

[58] Or "mocked her [Rhodopis] mercilessly;" the gender of the pronoun is ambiguous.

μὲν γὰρ αὕτη, τῆς πέρι λέγεται ὅδε ὁ λόγος, οὕτω δή τι κλεινὴ ἐγένετο ὡς καὶ οἱ πάντες Ἕλληνες Ῥοδώπιος τὸ οὔνομα ἐξέμαθον, τοῦτο δὲ ὕστερον ταύτης ἑτέρη τῇ οὔνομα ἦν Ἀρχιδίκη ἀοίδιμος ἀνὰ τὴν Ἑλλάδα ἐγένετο, ἧσσον δὲ τῆς προτέρης περιλεσχήνευτος. Χάραξος δὲ ὡς λυσάμενος Ῥοδῶπιν ἀπενόστησε ἐς Μυτιλήνην, ἐν μέλεϊ Σαπφὼ πολλὰ κατεκερτόμησέ μιν. Ῥοδώπιος μέν νυν πέρι πέπαυμαι. (Herodotus 2.134–5)

This strange story, which appears in slightly different versions in other, later authors,[59] has frequently been examined, and has caused considerable confusion. It is frequently read using the reverse biographical fallacy, that is, to assume that Herodotus is somehow spinning this story from the threads of Sappho's poetry. Although this possibility cannot be ruled out, it suffers from the absence of any supporting evidence. No extant fragment of Sappho mentions Rhodopis, although two fragments may refer to Doricha, the name, according to Strabo (13.69), used by Sappho to describe the woman everyone else referred to as Rhodopis. In neither Sapphic fragment does the name Doricha appear in full, and recent reexamination of the manuscripts has suggested that neither fragment is likely to bear that name at all.[60] Far from knowing that Herodotus based his story on the poetry of Sappho, the best we can do is to suggest that certain fragments of Sappho's poetry *may* have contained a name that Strabo would later associate with Herodotus' story. This suggests the operation of the reverse-biographical fallacy on the part of modern textual editors, and possible evidence for Strabo (or one of his sources) having attempted to reconcile Herodotus with Sappho,[61] but tells us nothing about Herodotus' own motives in telling the story.

There have been recent attempts to make sense of this story on its own terms, rather than as a possible gloss on Sappho's poetry. Some have suggested that Herodotus may be alluding to a representation of Sappho in comedy; certainly, she seems to have been represented in other Old Comedy and this story is outlandish enough to have belonged on the Athenian stage. As Lidov has pointed out, it is suggestive that Herodotus refers to Rhodopis as a *hetaera*; this is the first attested use of the term to mean "prostitute" rather than "female

[59] See Lidov (2002) for details.
[60] Lidov (2002) 223–4.
[61] A consideration explored in detail in Lidov (2002).

companion," and may well be a usage derived from comedy.[62] Others have pointed out structural similarities between this story and the Cinderella tale; particularly interesting in this regard are the roasting-spits she donates to Delphi and the name of her slave-master's father, Hephaestopolis.[63]

Beyond these issues, a key to this strange story seems to lie in the strongly parallel epithets Herodotus offers for Aesop and for Sappho; respectively, he calls them *logopoios* and *mousopoios* (roughly, "maker of stories" and "muse/music-maker"). My interpretation of this passage from Herodotus begins accordingly with an account of these terms. As many other readers of Herodotus have noticed, the epithet *logopoios* is used by him only of Aesop (in this one passage) and of Herodotus' predecessor as a historian, Hecataeus of Miletus.[64] This juxtaposition seems striking, the more so because Hecataeus the *logopoios* makes his first appearance in Herodotus just a few pages later, in a passage where Herodotus famously demonstrates the vastly greater antiquity of Egyptian culture:

> The priests of Zeus (i.e., Amun) had earlier treated the story-maker (*logopoios*) Hecataeus much the same as me, though he traced his ancestry and tied his ancestry to a god in the sixteenth generation, and I did not trace my ancestry at all. They led me into the great sanctuary and counted off the huge wooden statues, showing them to be as numerous as they said. Each archpriest set up here a statue of himself while he was still alive. Pointing to the statues and counting, they showed me that each priest succeeded his own father, going through all the statues from that of the priest who had died most recently, until they had showed me all the statues. So the priests offered a counter-genealogy to Hecataeus' own tracing of his ancestry and tying it to a god in the sixteenth generation, because they did not accept among themselves that a man could be descended from a god. And so they counter-genealogized as follows, saying that each of the statues was a *pirômis* descended from a *pirômis*,

[62] Lidov (2002) 229.

[63] For the frequency of hearth/fire-related names in Balkan versions of the Cinderella story, see Anderson (2000) 28.

[64] Armayor (1987); Hartog (1988) 296; Nagy (1990b) 325; Lidov (2002) 212 n18. A TLG search, in fact, shows no occurrence of the term to refer to anyone *other than* Aesop or Hecataeus before Thucydides (6.38.2). In Thucydides, the word occurs in the context of Athenagoras' speech at Syracuse in 415 BC disparaging the risks of an Athenian invasion and is used, in a pejorative sense, of those who take the Athenian threat more seriously; in other words, the word is used of those who are good at coming up with a compelling, but false, story.

until they showed that the 345 statues were all of a *pirômis* descended from a *pirômis*, and they tied their lineages neither to gods nor to heroes (a *pirômis* is a *kalos kagathos* (i.e., an aristocrat) in the Hellenic tongue).

Πρότερον δὲ Ἑκαταίῳ τῷ λογοποιῷ ἐν Θήβῃσι γενεηλογήσαντί [τε] ἑωυτὸν καὶ ἀναδήσαντι τὴν πατριὴν ἐς ἑκκαιδέκατον θεὸν ἐποίησαν οἱ ἱρέες τοῦ Διὸς οἷόν τι καὶ ἐμοὶ οὐ γενεηλογήσαντι ἐμεωυτόν. Ἐσαγαγόντες ἐς τὸ μέγαρον ἔσω ἐὸν μέγα ἐξηρίθμεον δεικνύντες κολοσσοὺς ξυλίνους τοσούτους ὅσους περ εἶπον· ἀρχιερεὺς γὰρ ἕκαστος αὐτόθι ἱστᾷ ἐπὶ τῆς ἑωυτοῦ ζόης εἰκόνα ἑωυτοῦ· ἀριθμέοντες ὦν καὶ δεικνύντες οἱ ἱρέες ἐμοὶ ἀπεδείκνυσαν παῖδα πατρὸς ἑωυτῶν ἕκαστον ἐόντα, ἐκ τοῦ ἄγχιστα ἀποθανόντος τῆς εἰκόνος διεξιόντες διὰ πασέων, ἐς ὃ ἀπέδεξαν ἁπάσας αὐτάς. Ἑκαταίῳ δὲ γενεηλογήσαντι ἑωυτὸν καὶ ἀναδήσαντι ἐς ἑκκαιδέκατον θεὸν ἀντεγενεηλόγησαν ἐπὶ τῇ ἀριθμήσι, οὐ δεκόμενοι παρ' αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ θεοῦ γενέσθαι ἄνθρωπον. Ἀντεγενεηλόγησαν δὲ ὧδε, φάμενοι ἕκαστον τῶν κολοσσῶν πίρωμιν ἐκ πιρώμιος γεγονέναι, ἐς ὃ τοὺς πέντε καὶ τεσσεράκοντα καὶ τριηκοσίους ἀπέδεξαν κολοσσοὺς πίρωμιν ἐκ πιρώμιος γενόμενον, καὶ οὔτε ἐς θεὸν οὔτε ἐς ἥρωα ἀνέδησαν αὐτούς. Πίρωμις δέ ἐστι κατ' Ἑλλάδα γλῶσσαν καλὸς κἀγαθός. (Herodotus 2.143)

This scene, fascinating for its juxtaposition between the vastly different timescales of Greek and Egyptian history, has attracted considerable debate. Much of this debate revolves around two questions: is Herodotus reporting on something that was found in Hecataeus' own works, and, if so, did Hecataeus accurately report a genuine encounter he had had in Egypt?[65] It is not necessary, from my perspective in this chapter, to resolve these questions, or to take any fixed position on them. Regardless of the authenticity of either Herodotus' *or* Hecataeus' account here, this passage is doing significant work in its context within Herodotus' discussion of Egypt in Book 2, and it

[65] Hartog (1988) 341–2 suggests that Herodotus wishes to make Hecataeus' genealogy seem paltry. Stephanie West (1991) 147 thinks Herodotus may have invented the anecdote for his own purposes; Moyer (2002), in contrast, thinks that both Greek historians draw on contemporary Egyptian anxieties about their own relationship to the deep past of Egypt. Lidov (2002) 214 finds that Herodotus may be mocking Hecataeus' naïveté. Pelliccia (1992) 74 feels likewise that Herodotus' treatment is rather sarcastic here; Armayor (1987) 12 thinks instead Hecataeus has used this story to mock the pretensions of aristocratic Greek families, and that Herodotus is being unduly literal in his reading of Hecataeus. Alan Lloyd (Asheri, Lloyd, and Corcella (tr. 2007) 345 finds that "[a]t first sight the details are difficult to credit, but the narrative becomes comprehensible if we regard it as a conflation of a report in Hecataeus' *Genealogies*, Herodotus' experiences during his confrontation with the priests, and interpretations and afterthoughts on both." In what follows, I bracket the questions of the authenticity and source of the story.

is the nature of that work that interests me. As others have noted, Herodotus' rejection of the (patently absurd) claim that Rhodopis built one of the pyramids as a memorial to herself reads like a sort of ironic commentary on the Theban priests' reproach of Hecataeus for thinking his ancestry ancient, which is found just nine chapters later.[66] The contrast between Greek and Egyptian timescales is first made comic, then sublime – a sequencing that tends to mitigate the sublimity of the later episode.

As such, the juxtaposition of these two episodes might seem to undermine the seriousness with which Herodotus would have us take the figure of Hecataeus, a point perhaps emphasized by the use of the word *logopoios* to describe both Hecataeus and Aesop (and *only* to describe these two men), a point we have already anticipated above. By using the word first of Aesop, and thus grounding its meaning in the world of beast-fables, Herodotus prepares the way for us to think of Hecataeus as, like Aesop, a teller of fables and, by extension, to think of the encounter between Hecataeus and the Theban priests as one of those fables. We might even suggest, with Alan Lloyd, that this scene has the effect of discrediting Hecataeus' entire chronology of early Greek history.[67]

That said, in thinking of the *logoi* of Aesop and Hecataeus as "fables," we should not make the mistake of assuming that Herodotus is dismissing the work of both as fiction or, worse, as lies. Instead, Herodotus may be thinking of different kinds of truth-value or use-value.[68] Just as Aesopian fables impart useful moral lessons even as they feature talking animals and other patent impossibilities, so the story of Hecataeus in Thebes has use-value as a means of establishing the genuinely overwhelming ancientness of Egypt, even if its truth-value as an account of Hecataeus' life is problematic. This use-value obtains even if Herodotus intends us to reject the details of Hecataeus' genealogically driven narrative of Greek protohistory; the anecdote still serves as a powerful reminder of the genuinely vast differences between the scope of Greek and Egyptian history, even if every detail associated

[66] Lidov (2002) 212.
[67] Asheri, Lloyd, and Corcella (tr. 2007) 345.
[68] What follows is to some extent analogous to the distinction between *etumos*-truth and *alêthês*-truth that I discuss in more detail in Beecroft (2006).

with the anecdote is suspect.[69] In fact, to make use of untrue stories (such as that of Rhodopis building a pyramid) and of possibly untrue stories (such as that of Hecataeus in Thebes) may well be to engage in a historical method that is decidedly un-Hecataean, at least judging by what survives of the opening of Hecataeus' *Genealogies*:

> Hecataeus of Miletus speaks (*mutheomai*) thus: I write the following things, which I consider to be true. For the stories (*logoi*) of the Greeks are many and laughable, as it seems to me.
>
> Ἑκαταῖος Μιλήσιος ὧδε μυθεῖται· τάδε γράφω, ὡς μοι δοκεῖ ἀληθέα εἶναι· οἱ γὰρ Ἑλλήνων λόγοι πολλοί τε καὶ γελοῖοι, ὡς ἐμοὶ φαίνονται, εἰσίν. (Hecataeus fr. 1 Jacoby)

Hecataeus begins his work by announcing that, although there are many *logoi* prevalent among the Greeks that are so false as to be laughable, his own account will exclude these stories, and include only those that he considers to be true (*alêthês*). Hecataeus foregrounds his own evaluation of the truthfulness of the stories of others, establishing twice in this short fragment that what follows will be informed by his own evaluative criticism, and thus twice asserting his authority to discern truth from falsity. Further, he seems to mark his own work as separate from the category of *logos*; the implication of his sentence is that *all* the *logoi* of the Greeks, and not just some of them, are laughably wrong, and the "true things" (*alêthea*) that he writes seem of a different order altogether. In identifying Hecataeus as a *logopoios*, then, Herodotus undercuts Hecataeus' authority (and in Hecataeus' own terms!) from his first entry into the text, anticipating that undercutting through the earlier reference to Aesop the *logopoios*.

Although the Proem to Herodotus' *Histories* begins with its author's name, it offers a striking contrast to the opening of Hecataeus's *Genalogia*, omitting any further reference to its author's perspective and preferring instead to emphasize the preservation of memory of "events" (*ta genomena*) and "great and amazing deeds" (*erga megala kai thômasta*) (Herodotus I *Pr.* 2–3). In the chapters that immediately follow, Herodotus narrates the Persian account of the origins of the

[69] As we shall see in Chapters 5–7, contemporary Chinese texts are likewise concerned with genealogical connections to a mythic foundational past, although in China the emphasis is on ritual continuity as much as on genealogy.

Trojan Wars, drawing our attention to the fact that the Persians think that Helen's abduction was recompense for the earlier abductions of Europa and Medea (I.2–3), without editorial comment of any kind. Even at the end of this narration, Herodotus remains disinclined to adjudicate between Persian and Greek accounts of the mythical past (1.5 9–14).

In general, then, Herodotus does not seem unduly concerned with discerning the veracity of mythical events extraneous to his main project of tracing the origins and conduct of the Persian Wars. Whereas Hecataeus makes it clear from the beginning that he is going to give us only the *logoi* that he accepts as true (with a truth-value presumably tied to their use-value within his genealogical narrative), Herodotus displays an early (and continuous) willingness to present stories (*logoi*) whose truthfulness he refuses to judge.[70] He is able to do so in part because the nature of his project is different from that of Hecataeus. The latter is attempting to construct a (Panhellenic) narrative that links the mythic past to the present; Herodotus, taking what I will call an incipiently cosmopolitan approach, is happy to report the *logoi* of various peoples about the ancient past, without judging their veracity, because his goal is rather to account for events (*ta genomena*) in the more recent past, events that exceed the bounds of Hellenic (or any other) culture.[71] In reporting the culturally bound traditions of the Egyptians and the Greeks, what matters for Herodotus is less whether or not either set of traditions proves to be entirely accurate *per se* (although he may be happy, for several reasons, to demolish Hecataeus' version of those Greek traditions). Rather, he is attempting to match the *logoi* of different peoples to construct a history with more

[70] See Pelliccia (1992) 77–80. Pelliccia in particular sees this passage as the end of a priamel, in which the mythico-genealogical version of history favored by Hecataeus is seductively presented to us, as a means of introducing his own event-driven kind of historical inquiry, and uses the scene of Hecataeus in Thebes to suggest that "Hecataeus' *Genealogia* was a special target of Herodotus' disdain" (Pellicia (1992) 74).

[71] Dewald (2002; in Bakker, de Jong, and Van Wees) 270 is skeptical of the extent to which Herodotus' objections to the stories of the Persians and Phoenicians here have much to do with their belonging to the *spatium mythicum* rather than the *spatium historicum*. Instead, she argues that Herodotus objects to these *logoi* as "partial and partisan." *Mutatis mutandis*, I believe her point here is equivalent to my claim that Herodotus is occupying an "incipiently cosmopolitan" perspective.

universal applicability, and as such the *logos* of Hecataeus in Thebes marks the distinctions between Greek and Egyptian chronological scale.

The encounter between Hecataeus and the Egyptian priests acts, then, as an example of the sort of fable that Hecataeus dismisses, while simultaneously serving to dismiss Hecataeus' own' account of early Greek history. I now return to the story of Rhodopis, and the purpose that Aesop and Sappho might serve within it. Herodotus' language in introducing this story, and especially the claim that Rhodopis had one of the pyramids built for herself, is strikingly reminiscent of that used by Hecataeus at the opening of the *Genealogia*. The quotation of that opening that we might have expected in the Proem to Herodotus is found instead here. Where Hecataeus had claimed that "the stories of the Greeks were many and laughable" οἱ γὰρ Ἑλλήνων λόγοι πολλοί τε καὶ γελοῖοι, Herodotus introduces the false claim about the pyramid's commissioning by saying, "Some of the Greeks say that this [pyramid] was by the courtesan woman Rhodopis, but they do not speak accurately" Τὴν δὴ μετεξέτεροί φασι Ἑλλήνων Ῥοδώπιος ἑταίρης γυναικὸς εἶναι, οὐκ ὀρθῶς λέγοντες. Where the Proem avoids both evaluative historical criticism and overt textual echoes of the opening of Hecataeus' *Genealogia*, we find both at once in Herodotus' denunciation of this particular *logos*.[72] The rather gratuitous reference, then, to the *logopoios* Aesop reminds us of Herodotus' predecessor, the *logopoios* Hecataeus (introduced by that name nine chapters later), and thus of Hecataeus' views on such *logoi geloioi*. At the same time, the inclusion of Aesop reminds us that even demonstrably false *logoi* can have real use-value, illustrating truths about human relationships in a fictionalized guise. The *logos* of Rhodopis, then, simultaneously evokes Hecataeus' rejection of false *logoi* and surpasses that rejection by reminding us of the usefulness of Aesopian *logoi*.

It remains to consider the reasons for Sappho's inclusion in this narrative. At least part of the answer, I argue, lies in the parallels that this story draws between Aesop and Sappho. Both figures are

[72] As Alan Lloyd reminds us, one of several times within Book II where Herodotus engages in the refutation of an alternative argument (Asheri, Lloyd, and Corcella (tr. 2007) 337).

extraneous to the main narrative; Aesop is only mentioned as a former fellow-slave with Rhodopis on Samos, whereas Sappho only assumes significance at the end of the story when Rhodopis marries Sappho's brother Charaxus. Aesop and Sappho thus form bookends to the fable of Rhodopis. They are also highly differentiated socially; Aesop is a humble slave, whereas the freeborn Sappho sings at the heart of her community. They are linked, through this anecdote, in a kind of anti-genealogy; one's former slave-mate is no relation to one's sister-in-law, yet the connection Herodotus makes links the two figures (and of course their genres) through a parodistic genealogy that mimics the sorts of generic genealogies we have seen in accounts of Homer and Terpander, and will see in the next chapter with respect to Stesichorus.

I now return to the similar terms used to describe Aesop and Sappho: Aesop is a *logopoios* (or "story-maker"), whereas Sappho is *mousopoios* ("muse-making," or "poetry-making"). This latter word is rather rare in Greek literature, and may in fact have been invented by Herodotus for the purposes of this passage; there are no known prior occurrences of the word, although it was used by Euripides in the *Hippolytus* (composed contemporaneously with Herodotus' *Histories*):

Always shall poetry-making about you be a care for maidens, and Phaedra's desire for you shall not, unnamed, fail and be silent.

ἀεὶ δὲ μουσοποιὸς ἐς σὲ παρθένων
ἔσται μέριμνα, κοὐκ ἀνώνυμος πεσὼν
ἔρως ὁ Φαίδρας ἐς σὲ σιγηθήσεται.
(Euripides, *Hippolytus* 1428–30)

In this passage, Euripides has Artemis console the dying Hippolytus with the thought that his story will not be forgotten; instead, the maidens of Trozen will reenact his story in song in a festival. This use of the word, as others have noticed, implies an ambiguity between poetic composition and performance.[73] Moreover, the similarity between the sort of chorus of young women imagined in Euripides and that that can be associated with Sappho's poetry suggests the possibility of a borrowing one way or the other, although the origins of the term

[73] See Barrett (1966) 413. This ambiguity is, as I have shown in Chapter 1, common to uses of *poieô* with respect to poetry.

remain obscure.[74] Whether Herodotus invented the word *mousopoios* for the purposes of this passage, or whether he made use of a relatively unusual (and therefore highly marked) word, the juxtaposition of Aesop *logopoios* with Sappho *mousopoios* seems designed to be noticed, the more so because the reference to Sappho is brought forward out of narrative sequence to place it as close to the reference to Aesop as possible. The bookends of the story are actually placed adjacent to each other, with the main body of the narrative following. It thus seems likely to me that we are to see some kind of generic contrast established between the *logopoios* and the *mousopoios*, a contrast outlined in mock-genealogic terms as a riposte to Hecataeus' methodology.

If this is indeed the case, then the actual genre of poetry composed for the occasion by Sappho seems of relevance. Sappho is perhaps most strongly associated with wedding-hymns, a genre eminently suited to her sister-in-law's arrival from Egypt. Herodotus does not have his Sappho sing such hymns, at least not of the sort that involve praise of the bride and bridegroom familiar from, for example, Sappho 31 and 44. Rather, he has her "mock mercilessly" (κατεκερτόμησέ) one or the other of the bridal couple, using a term that is redolent of the language of blame-poetry.[75] If the *logopoios* Aesop tells tales that have use-value even when false, then Sappho *mousopoios* engages in

[74] The word is also found at *Trojan Women* 1189, where Euripides uses it of the composer of Astyanax's epitaph. There is some suggestion of another possible early use of the term; in the *Life of Pindar* we hear that, when Pausanias of Sparta attacked Thebes and ordered it burnt, he exempted the house of Pindar, posting on that house the words Πινδάρου τοῦ μουσοποιοῦ τὴν στέγην μὴ καίετε, "Don't burn down the house of Pindar the muse-maker" (*Vita Pindari* 2.12). The connection to Pausanias' attack on Thebes in 395 BC seems confused; Xenophon (*Hellenica* 3.5) makes much of the complete failure of this attack, effectively ruling out the possibility that Pausanias either burned Thebes to the ground, or ordered the house of Pindar spared. Our earliest source for the story, Dio Chrysostom (ca. 40–120 AD), connects it in any event to Alexander the Great, rather than to Pausanias (*Orationes* 2.33). Given that the purpose of the story is to demonstrate the fame of Pindar, the name of the ruler involved is of minimal importance, and it is thus impossible to assign even a notional date to the anecdote, much less to its composition. We are left with no known use of the word *mousopoios* before Herodotus and Euripides.

[75] On the term in blame-poetry, see, for example, Nagy (1999a) 270–71, on Aeneas speaking at *Iliad* 20.200–202. Lidov (2002) 231–2 sees *katakertomeô* as possibly suggestive of the kind of ribaldry appropriate to weddings, citing as evidence *HHom* 4.54–59, in which Hermes, fresh from inventing the lyre, begins to sing about his own conception in the style of "young men/ In their prime taunt[ing] *double-entendres* at festivities" ἠΰτε κοῦροι ἡβηταὶ θαλίῃσι παραιβόλα κερτομέουσιν. Although

the fundamental lyric activities of praise and blame, the latter quite explicitly within our passage.[76]

It is significant that Sappho appears by name only once in Herodotus, and that she occurs there in the context of performing blame-poetry, in a passage in which Herodotus engages in one of his own comparatively rare acts of "blame" uttered in his own voice. Dewald finds only eighteen such instances; of these, fully sixteen, including this one, are cases in which Herodotus corrects errors of fact or judgment.[77] Just as Aesop heralds the appearance of Hecataeus, his fellow fabulist (and incidentally provides a ludicrous contrast to Hecataeus' genealogical pride), so Sappho arrives at just the moment when Herodotus chooses to exercise his capacity to blame – and the target of that blame is, as with Hecataeus in Thebes, a Hellenocentric confounding of the timescales of Greek and Egyptian history. Sappho's mockery of her newly arrived sister-in-law parallels Herodotus' own attack on the Greeks who claim that Rhodopis constructed one of the pyramids herself. Herodotus' blame, however, differs from that of Sappho in two important respects. First, where Sappho insults (presumably) Rhodopis' character and low birth in an avowedly personal attack, Herodotus rejects the *logos* of an unnamed collection of Greeks without attacking their character. In addition, on the level of language, Herodotus is careful to avoid the kind of blame-language we are to imagine Sappho's poem would have involved, preferring instead to observe that they are οὐκ ὀρθῶς λέγοντες, "not speaking [by extension, not telling *logoi*] correctly." Despite the verbal and structural echoes to the opening of Hecataeus' *Genealogia*, which we have discussed above, Herodotus' language is also less blame-laden than that of his predecessor, who characterizes the *logoi* he disagrees with as *geloioi*, "laughable." By including Sappho in his narrative in the way that he does, then, Herodotus is able at once to evoke the culture of blame-poetry, and, in evoking it, to surpass it.

the *content* of Hermes' song may be an explicit and comic account of his own conception, its *context* seems more closely allied to the sympotic than to the hymenaeal. I am therefore reluctant to agree with Lidov in connecting the verb *ketromeô* explicitly with wedding-hymns, although certainly they are a potential context for this kind of mockery.

[76] On the subject of praise- and blame-poetry in Archaic lyric, see especially Gentili (1988) 107–14.

[77] Dewald (2002; in Bakker, de Jong, and Van Wees) 282.

The activities of both the *logopoios* and the *mousopoios* are, then, highly relevant both to the general work of the historian, and more specifically to Herodotus' attempt to establish his own method and its relationship to that of Hecataeus. In both cases, the questions at stake are the bracketing of the heroic/mythological/genealogical cast of previous Panhellenic historical narratives and its replacement with an events-driven, measured and cosmopolitan alternative. There are real ambivalences in both representations, as well. The *logopoios* Hecataeus is shown in an embarrassing light as he tells his own genealogical *logos*– but Herodotus uses that *logos* as part of his own *logos* about the antiquity of Egypt, and Aesop is introduced into the *Histories* a few chapters earlier to remind us of the usefulness of *logoi* if handled appropriately. Similarly, Sappho's introduction as a blame-poetess presents readers with the mode of praise-and-blame that Herodotus contrasts with his own, more tempered, use of that mode.

In constructing a historical narrative out of the disparate *logoi* that individuals and communities create, perhaps the two most fundamental questions to be asked of each *logos* and event are: Is it true or false? and is it worthy of praise or blame? Herodotus uses the figures of Sappho and Aesop, I would argue, as foils in his own efforts to establish and assert his methodology. By its very nature, this argument must remain somewhat speculative. I believe, however, that the larger class of arguments to which it belongs, that of reading biographical anecdotes in terms of implied poetics, is far more likely here to yield a fruitful result than the class of arguments based on the reverse biographical fallacy. The latter class are themselves, as we have seen, based here in large part on a dubious reading of fragments of Sappho identifying the name Doricha therein (and then relying on Strabo to equate Doricha to Herodotus' Rhodopis) and are thus speculative in their own right. The former approach, that of assuming not that Herodotus was a bad reader of Sappho, but that he was an intelligent writer deploying his material for his own purposes, is, I am certain, the correct approach, even should Herodotus' exact purposes have been rather different from those I have suggested.

As with Homer, then, we find that biographical anecdotes about lyric poets *interpret* the poems or traditions associated with the poet, as much as or more than they are *derived from* them. With Homer we saw that his *Vitae* used various aspects of his life to make claims about the

process by which Homeric poetry enters the Panhellenic sphere; with our lyric poets we find instead the means of recovering a history for a poetic tradition and integrating that history into the political sphere, both positively and negatively, and even to situate their own prose-genres within a scheme of existing works. Through the devices of genealogy (including the mock-genealogy linking Sappho to Aesop) and hero-cult, our ancient authors are able to construct a coherent (if unsubstantiated) account of the birth and development of poetic forms, of the processes by which that poetry became richer and more complex, of the initial hostility to (and later embrace of) these cultural innovations, and of the value of poetic acts of praise and blame.

The previous two chapters have explored, respectively, epic and lyric authorship. In the following chapter, I will explore an intermediate category of authorship, that involving Stesichorus. Not only does Stesichorus' own work (much of which treats epic themes in nonepic meters) bridge the epic-lyric generic division, but, as we shall see, the most salient anecdote about his life provides a dramatic setting within which that division and its tensions (along with the related epichoric-Panhellenic tensions) can be staged.

4

Authorship between Epic and Lyric

Stesichorus, the Palinode*, and Performance*

In one of the most fascinating moments of the intersection of philosophy and poetry in ancient Greek literature, Plato has his Socrates correct himself in the *Phaedrus* after having delivered a speech exhorting young men to give themselves to non-*erasteis* rather than to *erasteis*. In so doing, he wades into the debate about whether or not Helen actually went to Troy, a debate with serious implications for Panhellenic epic:

So, my friend, I need to be purified. There is an ancient purification for those who have erred in the telling of myth (*muthologia*), one that Homer did not perceive, but Stesichorus did. For when he was robbed of his eyes because of his slander of Helen, he was not ignorant like Homer, but because he was close to the Muses (*mousikos*) he knew the cause, and composed immediately,

> This is not a true story,
> You did not embark in the broad-benched ships,
> You did not reach the citadel of Troy.

And when he had created the whole of the so-called *Palinode* he recovered his sight immediately.

ἐμοὶ μὲν οὖν, ὦ φίλε, καθήρασθαι ἀνάγκη· ἔστιν δὲ τοῖς ἁμαρτάνουσι περὶ μυθολογίαν καθαρμὸς ἀρχαῖος, ὃν Ὅμηρος μὲν οὐκ ᾔσθετο, Στησίχορος δέ. τῶν γὰρ ὀμμάτων στερηθεὶς διὰ τὴν Ἑλένης κακηγορίαν οὐκ ἠγνόησεν ὥσπερ Ὅμηρος, ἀλλ' ἅτε μουσικὸς ὢν ἔγνω τὴν αἰτίαν, καὶ ποιεῖ εὐθύς –

> Οὐκ ἔστ' ἔτυμος λόγος οὗτος,
> οὐδ' ἔβας ἐν νηυσὶν εὐσέλμοις,
> οὐδ' ἵκεο Πέργαμα Τροίας·

καὶ ποιήσας δὴ πᾶσαν τὴν καλουμένην Παλινῳδίαν παραχρῆμα ἀνέβλεψεν. (Plato, *Phaedrus* 242a2–b3)

I have discussed this passage elsewhere, and more particularly the fragment of the *Palinode* it offers, demonstrating that the language of this fragment is highly charged.[1] The first line, which I have translated above as "this is not a true story," is, I have argued, a strongly programmatic line, in which each word is carefully chosen from among the available options within the language. The demonstrative *houtos*, in normal discourse, points to objects near the hearer; within the marked language of epic, it frequently serves to point to people, objects, even narratives that the epic singer has already made vivid to his audience.[2] The word I translate as "story," *logos*, is of course a notoriously difficult term for which to find an adequate English gloss; I argue that it is here most importantly opposed to *muthos*, which is used of the authoritative speech of powerful individuals within epic, and of epichoric cultic narratives (i.e., "myth") outside of epic. *Logos* in this passage, then, is what *muthos* is not; it is nonauthoritative, manipulative language, and it is associated with Panhellenic epic. Finally, *etumos* as a word for truth I find to be used in contrast to the other great truth-word in Greek, *alêthês*. Again drawing on epic usage, I show that, where *alêthês* tends to be used of truths as asserted, *etumos* is used of truths that prove themselves in time through the results they produce; thus, Odysseus' homecoming (*nostos*) is not *etumos* when Penelope and Odysseus-disguised-as-beggar converse in *Odyssey* 19, because his homecoming has as yet no practical effect; it becomes *etumos* (and is described as such by Eurycleia at *Odyssey* 23.26–7) when Odysseus has killed the suitors and resumed his role as Penelope's husband and the lord of his estate. Drawing especially on examples from lyric, I show that this truth-as-proved-by-events that is *etumos* has an epichoric dimension as well, as at Theognis 1.713, where it refers to a local variant myth of Sisyphus in which that hero returns from the dead.

This deceptively simple line of text, then, which seems to say only, "This is not a true story," turns out to have rather more to say than that,

[1] Beecroft (2006). I will not re-present the details of that argument here, but I do summarize my findings.

[2] For the point, see Bakker (1999a).

or at any rate to say what it says in rather more nuanced terms. *Etumos*, *logos*, and *houtos* are, each of them, culturally significant terms, each part of a system of alternatives, chosen for a specific reason. What the Palinode is refuting about Helen's journey to Troy is not a *muthos* but a *logos*, it is characterized as not being *etumos* rather than not being *alêthês*, and is identified with one of a set of possible demonstrative pronouns. Furthermore, this epichoric version of the *logos* of Helen is presented in the form of a denial of the Panhellenic, a choice that endows this performance of the *logos* with a Panhellenic significance of its own.

"This is not a true story," then, is a patently inadequate translation – it touches the surface of what is being said without capturing any of the depth. A fuller translation will necessarily be an overtranslation, sacrificing consistency of style and register, as well as readability, in an attempt to say all. "This – this story here, the one we all know and that I have created before your eyes – this story, not imagined in its aspect as an authoritative saying, but rather as the twisting and potentially misleading words of an illegitimate usurper, this one story out of many that could be told, is not an epichoric story, is ineffective in terms of local cult, will not bear fruit for us if we tell it and hear it, should not be accepted as true because of where we hear it, but can be found wanting in terms of the results we see from it – and, with it, the whole epic tradition." The *Palinode*, I argue, dramatizes a serious challenge to Homeric epic, reasserting the power of local cult over Panhellenic *muthos*, just as Helen, in blinding Stesichorus, reasserts her epichoric status as a goddess over her Panhellenic status as the adulterous and treacherous wife of Menelaus. In what follows, I examine the uses to which this challenge can be put. Plato and Isocrates both take up the rivalry between Panhellenic epic and epichoric lyric, and both locate the relationship between rhetoric and philosophy in analogous terms, although with predictably opposite perspectives. Herodotus, though he does not name Stesichorus, seems to make use of a similar story, for purposes that recall the contrasts we saw him establishing with Hecataeus in the previous chapter. The geographer Pausanias provides insight into epichoric refractions of the problem of Helen. Finally, in a return to the *Palinode* itself, I examine the evidence for multiple palinodes and suggest the existence of a genre that performs the resistance to epic.

Socrates and Stesichorus: Blind Poets and Mute Pages

I begin with a fragmentary reading of the *Phaedrus*, a reading that is based upon the tensions between Panhellenic and epichoric modes of knowing as represented by the *Palinode* episode, and on Plato's deployment of this tension as an analogue to various oppositions he wishes to construct. My focus is entirely on the deployment of the story of Stesichorus and the *Palinode* within the *Phaedrus*, allowing the philosophical background to dissolve. That said, the figure of Stesichorus is crucial to the dialogue, and an understanding of his function within it will, I hope, enhance our understanding of the dialogue and its content.

A few general observations may be in order first. We must remember that this is the only ancient source for our quotation from the *Palinode*. Further, it is one of the two earliest sources for the story of Steischorus' blindness (the other being the *Helen* of Isocrates, which may or may not be later than the *Phaedrus*). We are thus never able to gain access to the text of the *Palinode*[3] without also being connected to the scene of its authorship, and so the *logos* of Helen and the *logos* of Stesichorus himself are inextricably linked for us, in a mutually constitutive structure of poem and scene of authorship, which features prominently in the Chinese section of this book.[4]

Within the *Phaedrus*, the quotation from the *Palinode* is framed by a discussion of the biographical context for that anecdote, which is in turn framed by a contextualization of that context within the dialogue, which contextualization is itself framed by the dialogue as a whole. Let us begin by examining the innermost of these narrative frames; that is, Socrates' narration of the anecdote around the poetic fragment as cited above. Given my discussion of the contrast between *muthos* and *logos*, the reader will no doubt be struck by the concept of *muthologia* presented here. As Calame reminds us, there is for Plato a distinction to be made between *muthos*, the "discursive images of gods and heroes," and *logos*, the narrative medium through which they are described.[5] To engage in *muthologia*, then, is to create a narrative form

[3] Or at least the text of *this* palinode – see below for the possibility of other palinodes.

[4] See Sider (1989) for a review of the scholarship on this problem, and for a performance-oriented reading of the episode, which informs my own analysis.

[5] Calame (1991) 191.

within which a god or hero can be depicted. This is not, for Plato, necessarily an activity to be despised or avoided, though it is certainly an activity with its share of risks. Calame argues that, for Plato, the problem in engaging in *muthologia* is not the danger of falsehood, but rather the danger that the *muthos* discussed may not be inculcating proper civic values; we might say that *muthologia* risks not so much the failure to be *alêthês*, but rather the possibility that it will not prove to be *etumos* in its social context.[6] Within the *Phaedrus* itself, Plato has Socrates and Phaedrus discuss the *muthos* of Boreas' rape of Oreithyia:

Phaedrus: Tell me, Socrates, isn't it from some place along here by the Ilissus that Boreas is said [*legetai*] to have seized Oreithyia?

Socrates: So it is said [*legetai*].

Phaedrus: So was it indeed here? But the water seems so graceful and pure and clear, and fit for maidens to play beside.

Socrates: No – it was two or three *stadia* further down, at the place where we cross over to Argas, and somewhere around there there's an altar to Boreas.

Phaedrus: I've never noticed it. But, by Zeus, tell me, Socrates, are you persuaded that this *muthologêma* is true (*alêthes*)?

Socrates: If, like wise men (*sophoi*), I didn't believe it, it wouldn't be strange; then, being *sophos*, I might say that a breeze of Boreas coming off those nearby rocks pushed her when she was playing with Pharmaceia, and thus it came to be that she was said (*legô*) to have been seized by Boreas – or from the Areopagus, for this story (*logos*) is said (*legô*) as well, that there, and not here, she was seized. . . .

{ΦΑΙ.} Εἰπέ μοι, ὦ Σώκρατες, οὐκ ἐνθένδε μέντοι ποθὲν ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἰλισοῦ λέγεται ὁ βορέας τὴν Ὠρείθυιαν ἁρπάσαι;

{Σω.} Λέγεται γάρ.

{ΦΑΙ.} Ἆρ' οὖν ἐνθένδε; χαρίεντα γοῦν καὶ καθαρὰ καὶ διαφανῆ τὰ ὑδάτια φαίνεται, καὶ ἐπιτήδεια κόραις παίζειν παρ' αὐτά. {Σω.} Οὔκ, ἀλλὰ κάτωθεν ὅσον δύ' ἢ τρία στάδια, ᾗ πρὸς τὸ ἐν Ἄγρας διαβαίνομεν· καί πού τίς ἐστι βωμὸς αὐτόθι βορέου. {ΦΑΙ.} Οὐ πάνυ νενόηκα· ἀλλ' εἰπὲ πρὸς Διός, ὦ Σώκρατες, σὺ τοῦτο τὸ μυθολόγημα πείθῃ ἀληθὲς εἶναι;

[6] Calame (1991) 192.

{Σω.} Ἀλλ' εἰ ἀπιστοίην, ὥσπερ οἱ σοφοί, οὐκ ἂν ἄτοπος εἴην, εἶτα σοφιζόμενος φαίην αὐτὴν πνεῦμα Βορέου κατὰ τῶν πλησίον πετρῶν σὺν Φαρμακείᾳ παίζουσαν ὧσαι, καὶ οὕτω δὴ τελευτήσασαν λεχθῆναι ὑπὸ τοῦ Βορέου ἀνάρπαστον γεγονέναι – ἢ ἐξ Ἀρείου πάγου· λέγεται γὰρ αὖ καὶ οὗτος ὁ λόγος, ὡς ἐκεῖθεν ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐνθένδε ἡρπάσθη. (Plato, *Phaedrus* 229b4–d2)

Socrates goes on to say that whoever chooses to dismiss *muthologêma* of this sort will run into all sorts of difficulties explaining away the vast host of mythical beasts known to man. Unable to know himself fully, Socrates says, why should he attempt to investigate such prodigious beings as these?[7] The reader of the dialogue is left uncertain what Socrates' own views are on the story of Boreas and Oreithyia, but he seems more suspicious of those who adopt rationalizing approaches than of those who accept the *muthologêma* in a naïve way. More interesting for our purposes is the fact that Socrates enters into discussion of this point at all. The subject of their discussion is very much an epichoric tradition, one that is evidently connected to local cultic practice (the altar of Boreas), and concerning which there are varying *logoi* (Is this the site of the abduction, or is it further downstream? Did it all really happen on the Areopagus instead? Was a god involved, or was it merely an accident, "mythologized" after the fact?), and the concept of *logos* is mentioned frequently in this passage. Significantly, when Phaedrus asks Socrates if he believes the *muthologêma* to be true, he asks if it is *alêthês*, not if it is *etumos* – Phaedrus, follower of the orator Lysias and rationalizing investigator, wants to know if the story really happened, not if it is a ritually efficacious *logos*.

This dialogue's fascination with local cultic practices continues. Phaedrus and Socrates sit down in the shade of a plane tree, a tree that Socrates identifies as sacred to Achelous and the nymphs. The *logos* that will be the conversation between Socrates and Phaedrus is activated by a sacred location, just as much as the *logos* of Boreas and Oreithyia is made *etumos* through its epichoric connection with the sacred site of its enactment. It is in the context of this fascination with local ritual practice and *logos* that we must understand Socrates' quotation of the

7 Cf. the celebrated remark of Confucius' when a pupil asked him about ghosts and death. Confucius' reply is said to have been, "You cannot manage men – how then, can you manage ghosts?" "You do not understand life – how, then, can you understand death?" 季路問事鬼神 · 子曰 · 未能事人 · 焉能事鬼 · 曰 · 敢問死 · 曰 · 未知生 · 焉知死 (*Lunyu* 11.11 p. 97).

Palinode. Most immediately, Socrates uses the *Palinode* as a figure for his own retraction of his speech (which he calls a *logos* (237a5)) against Eros (*Phaedrus* 237a7–241d3), but the significance of his quotation goes deeper than that. The tradition Stesichorus is refuting is an epic tradition, and Socrates' first *logos*, which he performs and then retracts, takes on the form of an epic as well, to at least the extent that it begins with, and is thus authorized by, an invocation to the Muses (237a7). It is clear that Lysias' original speech is the true subject of Socrates' recantation; revealingly, Socrates characterizes that speech as a "feasting with *logoi*," τῶν λόγων . . . εἱστία (227b6–7). Given the later context provided by the quotation of the *Palinode* fragment, and the discussions of local cult praxis in the setting of the dialogue, and given that Socrates is clearly hostile to Lysias' remarks, it is important to read this use of *logoi* as conveying the sense of a multiform, devious, and unreliable discourse, a reading certainly borne out by the content of the *Phaedrus*.

The opposition Socrates constructs between his speech and that of Lysias operates on several levels, then, one of which is also the opposition between writing and speech. Platonic dialogues are often presented in the form of the recollections of an eyewitness, as when Phaedo reenacts Socrates' final discussion for Echecrates in the *Phaedo*, relying on his capacity to remember (and pleasure in remembering) conversations involving Socrates.[8] The *Phaedrus* is highly unusual in that a portion of it, Phaedrus' reenactment of Lysias' speech, is presented as the reading of a written text. Even more curiously, Phaedrus begins by asking Socrates for permission to perform Lysias' speech from memory, claiming that he hasn't learned the whole speech by heart yet, but has the general intent of it in his mind.[9] At this point, Socrates observes that he can see the text of the speech (*ton logon*) in Phaedrus' left hand, under his cloak, and Phaedrus consents to read the speech to Socrates rather than to perform it from memory. Plato has Socrates engage in a dialogue with a written text (in a written dialogue, no less), and offers a speech in rivalry with that which Phaedrus

[8] καὶ γὰρ τὸ μεμνῆσθαι Σωκράτους καὶ αὐτὸν λέγοντα καὶ ἄλλου ἀκούοντα ἔμοιγε ἀεὶ πάντων ἥδιστον (*Phaedo* 58d5–6).

[9] Οὑτωσὶ τοίνυν ποιήσω. τῷ ὄντι γάρ, ὦ Σώκρατες, παντὸς μᾶλλον τά γε ῥήματα οὐκ ἐξέμαθον· τὴν μέντοι διάνοιαν σχεδὸν ἁπάντων (*Phaedrus* 228d1–3).

has read. The contrast between Phaedo, who has the mnemonic power to recall the whole of the dialogue that bears his name, and Phaedrus, who is unable to recall a comparatively brief speech by Lysias (three Stephanus pages), is striking, and sets the stage for the more sustained critique of writing at the end of the *Phaedrus* (274d–278e).

This devalorization of writing against speech in the *Phaedrus* is also connected to the biographic device of poetic blindness broached by Socrates. In telling us of Stesichorus' loss and recovery of his sight, he characterizes Homer as having been less fortunate, having lost his sight without regaining it because he was not *mousikos*. In our discussion of the *Lives of Homer* in Chapter 1, we have already seen the account preserved in the first *Vita Romana* that Homer was similarly blinded by Helen, but that his blindness became permanent because Homer was unwilling to burn his poems.[10] The Homeric version makes explicit the link between blindness and illiteracy, and between burning the manuscript of a poem and the total loss of that poem. In the case of Stesichorus, we shall see that the implications of literacy are less strong: the claim that Stesichorus' sight is restored should force us to reassess what it means to claim the continuance afterwards of a poem (the *Helen*) that enacts the transgression for which Stesichorus was initially punished.

D'Alfonso reminds us of the strangeness of characterizing, even if only by implication, Homer of not being *mousikos*, and argues that the term is being used here by Socrates in the sense of one who understands how to listen to the Muses.[11] On one level, this ability to listen to the Muses has practical value for Stesichorus, in allowing him to recover his sight. But it also has significance in terms of the capacity to remember, that capacity which Phaedrus seems to lack, and which Socrates will later explicitly say is diminished by the use of writing (275a5).

What is "true" *alêthês* in Panhellenic epic can seem false (not *etumos*) from the perspective of an epichoric tradition, and the story of Helen's abduction and sojourn in Troy is the case *par excellence* of such a *logos*. The deployment of the *Palinode* fragment in the *Phaedrus*, then, is

[10] Sider 427, in my view, may be too hasty to dismiss the possibility that this tradition might have been known to Plato.

[11] D'Alfonso (1994) 167–75.

part of Socrates' larger argument concerning the dangers of writing, because Socrates identifies writing with a universal and unchanging perspective much like that of Panhellenic epic (with its, for Socrates, false claim to Muse-inspired memory). What is *alêthês* in epic, like what is written on the page, cannot be questioned (275d–e), whereas that which is *etumos* in local tradition, like that which is argued orally, can be disputed and proved through examination and discussion. Revealingly, when Socrates later enjoins Phaedrus to tell speechmakers (those who create *logoi*), poets, and lawgivers that their works must be submitted to proof through oral argument, it is Homer who represents the poets. The blind poet who is not *mousikos* and does not understand what is *etumos* becomes, for Socrates, a figure for the muteness of the written word.

Isocrates and Helen: Palinode as/and Performance

Plato's use of this fragment of the *Palinode*, our only source for these lines, is then connected intimately with the *Phaedrus*' concerns about writing and orality, epichoric and Panhellenic, epic and dialogue, and truth, lies, and lies that look like truth. The story of Helen's *eidôlon*, sent to Troy without her, already a paradigm of epichoric tradition in opposition to Panhellenic epic, becomes also a figure for learning to distinguish between truth and falsehood through investigation and dialogue. Our next most significant source for the *Palinode* is Isocrates' speech in defense of Helen. It is impossible to be certain whether the *Helen* pre- or postdates the *Phaedrus*; certainly, the works of Isocrates and Plato each show an awareness of the works of the other.[12] In most respects, Isocrates' *Helen* serves a mirror-image function to that suggested by the *Phaedrus*. This is reflected, for example, on the level of genre, where Helen features almost contemporaneously in an epideictic oration (the *Helen*) and in a work structured precisely around a critique of just such an oration (the *Pheadrus*). Indeed, the Socrates of the *Phaedrus* would have been dismayed at the uses to which Helen is put in Isocrates' speech. The passage most immediately relevant to us comes near the end of the speech, after Isocrates describes the divine worship accorded Helen in Laconia:

[12] On Plato's response to other works of Isocrates in the *Phaedrus*, see McAdon (2004); see de Vries (1953) on Isocrates' response to the *Phaedrus*.

And she also displayed her power to the poet Stesichorus. For when he was beginning[13] his ode, he spoke profanely about her in some way, and as he stood up, he was robbed of his eyes, but then when he knew the cause of this disaster, he created the so-called Palinode, and was restored again (*palin*) to his own natural state.

Some of the Homeridae also say that Helen appeared to Homer during the night, to command him to create a poem concerning those who took the field at Troy, because she wished that the deaths of those men would be more envied than the lives of other men. And although some part is due to Homer's skill, it is mostly because of her that his poetry has become so fascinating, and so noted among all men.

Ἐνεδείξατο δὲ καὶ Στησιχόρῳ τῷ ποιητῇ τὴν αὑτῆς δύναμιν· ὅτε μὲν γὰρ ἀρχόμενος τῆς ᾠδῆς ἐβλασφήμησέν τι περὶ αὐτῆς, ἀνέστη τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἐστερημένος, ἐπειδὴ δὲ γνοὺς τὴν αἰτίαν τῆς συμφορᾶς τὴν καλουμένην παλινῳδίαν ἐποίησεν, πάλιν αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν φύσιν κατέστησεν.

Λέγουσιν δέ τινες καὶ τῶν Ὁμηριδῶν ὡς ἐπιστᾶσα τῆς νυκτὸς Ὁμήρῳ προσέταξεν ποιεῖν περὶ τῶν στρατευσαμένων ἐπὶ Τροίαν, βουλομένη τὸν ἐκείνων θάνατον ζηλωτότερον ἢ τὸν βίον τὸν τῶν ἄλλων καταστῆσαι· καὶ μέρος μέν τι καὶ διὰ τὴν Ὁμήρου τέχνην, μάλιστα δὲ διὰ ταύτην οὕτως ἐπαφρόδιτον καὶ παρὰ πᾶσιν ὀνομαστὴν αὐτοῦ γενέσθαι τὴν ποίησιν. (Isocrates, *Helen* 64–5)

The basic structure of this passage is similar to Plato's account: slander against Helen, the blinding of Stesichorus, his creation of the *Palinode*, and the restoration of his sight. There are similarities of language as well; both authors say that Stesichorus was "robbed of his eyes" (*tôn ophthalmôn esterêmenos*), rather than saying that he became blind, and both stress that the *Palinode* is "so-called" (*tên kaloumenên palinôidian*).[14] Further, we can see that the association between Stesichorus and Homer, born of their contrasting versions of the same tale, and of their shared blindness, is as much a part of Isocrates' version as of Plato's. But the differences are equally striking. Plato clearly privileges Stesichorus over Homer, stating that Stesichorus (unlike Homer) was *mousikos* and that as a result he (unlike Homer) was able to recover from his blindness. Isocrates seems instead (and, no doubt, more conventionally) to privilege Homer over Stesichorus. Both poets are visited by Helen, but in Stesichorus' case the visit is angry and

[13] See below for an alternative translation here.

[14] Graziosi (2002) 148 suggests that the similarities between the language of Plato's and Isocrates' accounts suggests that both may be paraphrasing the text of the *Palinode* itself.

vengeful, and requires expiation, whereas in Homer's case the visit is the inspiration for the composition of his great epics. Isocrates, then, is much more comfortable with the power of epic discourse than is Plato, and sees it as the source of a truer version of events (in spite of drawing our attention to the epichorically divine status of Helen in Sparta).

Further, there are significant differences in the details of their accounts. Isocrates seems to claim that blindness afflicted Stesichorus as he began to create the *Helen*, the poem in which he is said to have committed his blasphemy. If this creation is viewed as part of an oral tradition, why would that tradition reenact so disastrous a performance? If Isocrates viewed Stesichorus as *writing* the *Helen*, why would he not immediately destroy the offending text (as Homer fails to do in the *Vita Romana* anecdote)? Put another way, a *Palinode* seems to require an ode, the *Helen*, to recant; by Isocrates' account it is difficult to see why such a *Helen* should have continued to exist, and why the *Palinode* should not have become the *Helen* proper. Plato evades the problem by speaking only of the "slander" of Helen, although as we have seen the use of *houtos* in the first line of Plato's *Palinode* fragment implies that the narration of the "false" version of Helen's story has immediately preceded our fragment.

Plato's narration of the scene is ambiguous as to whether it discusses performance or composition; it is also silent on the question of the use of writing in authorship, although (as with the *Lives of Homer*) the mention of blindness implies oral composition of the *Palinode*. Isocrates, by contrast, foregrounds the fact that Stesichorus is blinded in performance, and seems to argue for the blasphemy, blinding, and palinode as a continuous performance sequence. The contrast between Plato's evasion of questions of orality and performance, in contrast to Isocrates' embracing of them, is not accidental. As I have argued, the *Phaedrus* aligns writing with epic and with rhetorical speechmaking, and associates Homer's blindness with all three. Stesichorus, before he recognizes his error and regains his sight, is necessarily aligned with this thematic cluster. For this reason, Socrates' Stesichorus needs to have written a *Helen* that survives, in order to maintain the structural parallel with his initial speech, retraction, and second speech. Isocrates, whose goal is to align Stesichorus with epideictic oratory, instead draws attention to performance in order to strengthen his case. In general, Plato has been treated as the more significant

source for the *Palinode*; in the context of the rhetorical agendas of both Plato and Isocrates, this preference needs to be reexamined.

To return to the question of why a *Helen* survived, many solutions have been proposed.[15] Among the most interesting is David Sider's claim that the blindness of Stesichorus is in fact a performative gesture. Sider argues that we should imagine, instead of two distinct poems (a *Helen* and a *Palinode*), a single poem, performed by a seated Stesichorus, which begins with a denunciation of Helen. As he performs his blasphemy, he performs his blinding, standing up and using gesture to intensify the experience for his audience. Soon, however, discovering the cause of his blindness, he recants his earlier blasphemy, and his vision is restored.[16] This theory has its attractions; it seems to render consistent the testimony of Isocrates and Plato, and to make intelligible the various complications inherent in these accounts. Others, however, have gone farther still, and have attempted to read Isocrates' account as inflected even more strongly by ideas of oral performance, taking into consideration especially the potentially choral nature of a Stesichorean performance.[17] Francesca d'Alfonso has argued that both *arkhomenos* and *anestê* in Isocrates' account should be interpreted as technical terms of choral performance.[18] D'Alfonso reminds us that *arkhomenos* can, in a choral context, mean to act as the *khorêgos*, or leader of the chorus, not simply to begin a performance. Further, *anestê*, the verb meaning "to stand up," should, for d'Alfonso, be read as a technical term as well, referring to the end of a performance.[19] Following this argument, we will reach conclusions precisely opposite to those reached by Sider; Stesichorus' blinding will not be a transitional device within a poem of blasphemy and recantation, but rather the dramatic conclusion of a poem of blasphemous attack on Helen.

[15] Sider 428 contains a good discussion of the various alternatives proposed.

[16] Sider 428 ff.

[17] Remembering that Stesichorus' name means "He who establishes the chorus." For the opposing view, that Stesichorus' poetry was not necessarily choral, see West (1971) 311. The claim by Heracleides that Stesichorus is to be understood as a citharodist may or may not correspond to the actual performance practice of Stesichorean poetry, but remains useful as evidence for the evolution of ideas of poetic lineage.

[18] D'Alfonso (1994) 419–29.

[19] D'Alfonso (1994) cites as evidence *Iliad* 9.195, where the verb is used of Achilles as he concludes his performance of the *klea andrôn*. For a seated performer, the close of a performance might easily be marked by rising to a standing position.

Isocrates' account, although consistent with both versions, gives us no clear reason to adopt either.

At the same time, the *Helen* is a poorly attested poem, and little evidence exists to suggest that it and the *Palinode* cannot have been the same poem.[20] Neither Isocrates nor Plato mentions the *Helen* as an autonomous work, and our sole textual evidence for the *Helen* comes from two fragments of poetry found in Athenaeus, a writer who, interestingly, never speaks of the *Palinode*. These two fragments are both thought to describe the wedding of Helen and Menelaus. The longer of them, found in a collection of poetic fragments on quinces, reads

> . . . and Stesichorus, in the *Helen*, calls to mind quinces like this:
> "They tossed many quinces towards the chariot
> of our ruler,
> and many myrtle leaves
> and garlands of roses, and twisted wreaths of violets."
>
> κυδωνίων δὲ μήλων μνημονεύει Στησίχορος ἐν Ἑλένῃ οὕτως
> πολλὰ μὲν κυδώνια μᾶλα ποτερρίπτουν ποτὶ δί-
> φρον ἄνακτι,
> πολλὰ δὲ μύρσινα φύλλα
> καὶ ῥοδίνους στεφάνους ἴων τε κορωνίδας οὔλας.
>
> (Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 3.21.1–6)

The shorter fragment, just two words of verse, reads only λιθάργυρον ποδονιπτῆρα, "foot-basin of lead monoxide" (Athenaeus, 10.74.26–7), and is perhaps from a catalogue of wedding presents for Helen and Menelaus. These fragments are hardly a reassuring basis on which to build a theory of the text as a whole.[21] We learn nothing of the offense that Isocrates believed Stesichorus to have committed from sources available to us. We can, however, learn something of the motivations that inspire Isocrates to present the story of the *Palinode*. His own

[20] See De Martino (1984) 38–44 for the fragments attributed to the *Helen*. It is interesting that no author refers to both the *Helen* and the *Palinode* by name, although absence of evidence is not evidence of absence.

[21] There are also a few testimonia for the *Helen*, including mentions of her suitors' pledge not to attack each other should one of them be chosen (in a scholiast to *Iliad* 2.339), and the story that Iphigenia was the daughter of Helen, through her rape by Theseus prior to her marriage (at Pausanias 2.22.6). Such testimonia hardly preclude the possibility that the *Helen* and the *Palinode* are the same poem.

speech is a sort of palinode in prose, attempting to rehabilitate Helen from the calumnies directed against her. Isocrates, however, is more interested in engaging with rhetoric, rather than epic, and his purpose seems more epideictic than expiatory. Isocrates situates his own speech in relationship to the earlier *Helen* of Gorgias, which Isocrates accuses of being a defense of Helen against her accusers, rather than a genuine encomium (*Helen* 14–15). The generic rivalry that Isocrates employs, between encomium and *apologia*, or defense-speech, then, mimics the generic rivalry between epic and lyric that is at the heart of the story of the *Palinode*.

Isocrates' speech opens by opposing those who create (*poieô*) an unusual and contradictory topic (ἄτοπον καὶ παράδοξον, *Helen* 1.1–2), arguing both sides of a case at once, or claiming that nothing we know exists.[22] Isocrates' opposition to such empty displays of rhetorical skill is eloquent, but the subject of his own discourse, the praise of Helen, seems itself perilously close to this category he has striven to condemn, using her abductions by Theseus (18–38) and by Paris (41–51), for example, as the chief signs of her good character, arguing rather perversely that neither man would have risked so much to abduct Helen had she not been peerless among women. Isocrates is able to use the *Helen* simultaneously to condemn rhetorical display whose content is unsuited to its power, and to conduct just such a display himself.

Herodotus: The *Palinode* Gains Local Color

Most accounts of Helen's *eidôlon* and its wanderings, and of their connection to the blinding of Stesichorus, derive from Plato and/or Isocrates.[23] Two sources that do seem to offer additional information

[22] He claims, significantly, that it is easy to create a *logos* that is *pseudês* (4.3), in an echo of passages in Homer (*Odyssey* 19.203), Hesiod (*Theogony* 27) and Theognis (1.713) which speak of lies that look like truth. See Beecroft (2006) for a discussion of this theme.

[23] Or at least such seemed to be the case until relatively recently. Below I discuss the significance of the discovery in 1963 of P. Oxy. 2506. I am also excluding from consideration, in this context, Euripides' *Helen*, which, although a fascinating work eminently worthy of study in its own right, sheds little light on the story of Stesichorus. See Podlecki (1971) and Leone (1964) for differing views on possible connections between the *Helens* of Stesichorus and Euripides. On the question of how heavily other ancient sources relied on Isocrates and Plato, see Davies (1982).

are Herodotus and Pausanias – Herodotus on the story of Helen in Egypt and its relationship to the epic tradition, and Pausanias on possible epichoric connections. Both provide insights into the role played by the interwoven stories of Helen and Stesichorus in the Greek world: Herodotus by making explicit the stakes for epic in the reality of Helen's journey to Troy, and Pausanias by suggesting a possible epichoric context for the *Palinode*.

Herodotus, in the account of Egypt in the second book of the *Histories*, describes a visit to the temple of Aphrodite *Xeniê*, found within the precincts of the temple of Proteus, king of Egypt at Memphis.[24] He deduces that this Aphrodite is in fact Helen, and learns her tale from the priests of the temple. According to this version, Paris was blown off course when carrying the abducted Helen back to Troy, and ended up in Egypt. There, Proteus, outraged by Paris' adulterous actions, orders Paris to flee his shores, holding Helen in protective custody awaiting the arrival of her husband. The Greeks fight at Troy, refusing to believe the Trojan claim that Helen is not in their possession, but, on finding Helen absent when they take Troy, they recognize the truth of the Trojans' claims, and send Menelaus to retrieve his wife (II.112–20).

There are two things noteworthy for their absence from this story: Helen's *eidôlon* and any mention of Stesichorus as a source. This combination of missing elements has suggested to some that Herodotus' source may well have been someone other than Stesichorus, who seems to have used the device of the *eidôlon* in the *Palinode*.[25] In view of the rather oblique ways in which Herodotus seems to make use of Hecataeus in Book Two, which we discussed in the previous chapter, it is also possible that Herodotus' silence on a Stesichorean source is programmatic rather than indicative of a lack of awareness.[26] Either way, Herodotus' account is valuable for the interest he shows in the implications of the story of Helen in Egypt for the epic tradition.

[24] The story has obvious affinities with the story of Rhodopis, also in Book Two and discussed in the previous chapter.

[25] Plato, *Republic* 586c provides the earliest evidence for Stesichorus' use of the *eidôlon*. Leone (1968) 13–15 suggests that Herodotus' account of Helen in Egypt draws on the Hesiodic tradition, not on Stesichorus.

[26] For a fuller argument on this point, see Pelliccia (1992).

Remember, as well, that the Proem to Herodotus is immediately followed by Herodotus' claim that the Persians understand Helen's abduction as in revenge for the earlier abductions of Europa and Medea (Herodotus I.2–3); for Herodotus, in other words, the question of what Helen really did and why is a question that gets at the origins of history (or at least of the kind of history he wishes to surpass).[27] Herodotus argues that Homer knew the story of Helen in Egypt, and chose to suppress it, but left traces of its existence in the epics:

> Inside there were robes, brightly embroidered, the work of women
> Of Sidon, whom godlike Alexander himself
> Led out from Sidon, sailing on the broad sea,
> On that journey when he brought back wellborn Helen.
>
> ἔνθ' ἔσαν οἱ πέπλοι παμποίκιλοι, ἔργα γυναικῶν
> Σιδονίων, τὰς αὐτὸς Ἀλέξανδρος θεοειδὴς
> ἦγαγε Σιδονίηθεν, ἐπιπλὼς εὐρέα πόντον,
> τὴν ὁδὸν ἣν Ἑλένην περ ἀνήγαγεν εὐπατέρειαν. (*Iliad* 6.289–92)[28]

Herodotus finds this account of Helen and Menelaus' voyage inconsistent with that found in the cyclic epic, the *Cypria*, which took the action of the Trojan War up to the beginning of the *Iliad*. Herodotus tells us that in the *Cypria* Paris and Helen's voyage is described as taking only three days from Sparta to Troy (II.117). He uses this inconsistency to suggest that the *Cypria* and the *Iliad* must have been created by different poets.[29] This view may seem naïve in some ways, but Herodotus does make an interesting point.[30] There seem to be versions of the

[27] For more on this point, see the discussion of Sappho in Herodotus in the previous chapter.

[28] Herodotus also cites *Odyssey* 4.227–30 and 4.451–52, both of which mention Helen and Menelaus' visits to Egypt, but which do so in a context where the visit they make on the return voyage is more likely to be what is meant.

[29] Herodotus here enters, in effect, into the Unitarian vs. Analyst debate, on the Analyst side but without an association of that position with writing: μάλιστα δηλοῖ ὅτι οὐκ Ὁμήρου τὰ Κύπρια ἔπεά ἐστι ἀλλ' ἄλλου τινός· "It is especially clear that the epic the *Cypria* is not by Homer but by some other man."

[30] This passage also suggests the beginning of a cosmopolitan approach to reading Homer, in which the texts of the poems are taken as monologic and as (notionally) authoritatively true in the *alêthês* sense. Herodotus' eagerness to establish who *actually* composed the *Cypria*, and whether or not Helen *actually* went to Troy, bespeaks a

epic tradition in which Helen and Paris stop in Sidon (and possibly also Egypt) *en route* to Troy, and other versions in which their journey is direct. Herodotus knows a version in which Helen remains in Egypt and does not go to Troy at all, although we do not know if his source is in the epic genre. Herodotus is very clear on why the Homeric tradition needed to erase the Egyptian variant:

> It seems to me that even Homer knew this *logos*. But, because it was not equally suitable for epic (*es tên epopoiiên*) as the other version that he used, he switched to that one, showing however that he also understood this *logos*.[31]
>
> Δοκέει δέ μοι καὶ Ὅμηρος τὸν λόγον τοῦτον πυθέσθαι· ἀλλ', οὐ γὰρ ὁμοίως ἐς τὴν ἐποποιίην εὐπρεπὴς ἦν τῷ ἑτέρῳ τῷ περ ἐχρήσατο, [ἐς ὃ] μετῆκε αὐτόν, δηλώσας ὡς καὶ τοῦτον ἐπίσταιτο τὸν λόγον. (Herodotus, II.116.2–5)

The version in which Helen does not go to Troy at all is precisely, as Herodotus suggests, not well suited to epic (especially epic in its Panhellenic capacity), as it vitiates the purpose of the Trojan War and renders the suffering wrought by that war meaningless. It is not impossible to imagine an epic tradition in which the war was fought over an *eidôlon*, rather than over Helen herself,[32] but such a tradition would look very different from the tradition we now know. It would, in fact, look much more like the epichoric and lyric tradition of the war, as represented by Stesichorus, which we have been examining. Not only the justification of the Trojan war, but also the identity of the Panhellenic epic tradition against other poetic traditions depends on Helen's true (that is, *alêthês*) presence in Troy, and Stesichorus, with a blindness associated with following the epic tradition and a return to sight occasioned by his departure from that tradition,[33] becomes once again a figure for the reciprocal lyric self-differentiation from epic

new attitude. Where earlier readings of the charter-myth of the Trojan war care about the ritual efficacy of the narrative, this emergent reading is concerned with its accuracy.

[31] The sense here is clearly that of *logoi* as seductive but misleading multiforms that look like truth but are not.

[32] See above on the possibility that Herodotus is here drawing on Hesiodic (and, therefore, epic) tradition.

[33] Remember that, as Plato seems to understand the question in the *Phaedrus*, it is precisely *because* Homer remains within the epic tradition that he must remain forever blind.

and concomitant epichoric self-differentiation from the Panhellenic. Herodotus' reference to the Stesichorean version (whether or not Stesichorus is his source) is also clearly programmatic for his own project as a historian; his cool reminder that the *logos* in which Helen remains in Egypt is unsuitable for epic recalls his earlier indifference to the Persian claim that Helen's abduction was in compensation for prior abductions, which, as we saw in the previous chapter, can be read as Herodotus' rejection of Hecataeus' methodological approach to the writing of history.[34]

Pausanias: Locating the Local

In presenting the Stesichorean tradition represented in the *Palinode* as epichoric, I have emphasized the use of the epichoric by Plato, Isocrates, and Herodotus as a mode of thinking, knowing, and reading (which are, in my view, its most salient dimensions), without seeking to localize the epichoricity of the *Palinode* in any one place. There seems no clear choice. One obvious candidate would be Sparta; we know that Helen was worshipped at Sparta as a goddess,[35] and Sparta is the city in which, in epic, she is queen alongside her husband, Menelaus. There have been many attempts to link the Sicilian Stesichorus with Sparta,[36] yet this account has more detractors than supporters.[37]

[34] Which, in its genealogical obsessions and in its preoccupations with what seems *alêthês* from his Panhellenic perspective, looks rather like an epic approach.

[35] See, for example, Isocrates, *Helen* 61.

[36] Already in ancient times the Parian Marble records a visit by Stesichorus to Greece in the same year as Aeschylus' first victory and Euripides' birth, that is, 485 BC, *Marmor Parium*, s. 50. The *Suda* mentions the story of Stesichorus' expulsion from Pallantium in Arcadia (*Suda* σ 1095). C. M. Bowra argued that Stesichorus presents the myths he employs from a specifically Spartan perspective, in order to win favor at Sparta (Bowra (1934) 115–19).

[37] The date given on the Parian Marble for Stesichorus' visit is inconsistent with the most commonly accepted dates for his life, those given by the *Suda*, 632–556 BC, though West (1971) 302 reasonably characterizes these dates as possessing a "specious precision" based on the desire to date Stesichorus after Alcman and before Simonides (another example of the prevalence of relative, rather than absolute, dating). The Parian Marble itself states that Stesichorus of Himera, "the second," won another victory at Athens in 370/69 BC, the year of the founding of Megalopolis (*Marmor Parium*, s. 73). The association made between Stesichorus and Pallantium

Another localization of Stesichorus' composition of the *Palinode* has been proposed, one that has attracted considerably more interest in recent years. This interpretation draws chiefly on a passage from Pausanias, although the story is attested elsewhere as well.[38] According to this version (as narrated by Pausanias), Helen communicated to Stesichorus her desire for him to recant his *Helen* through a human intermediary, Leonymus, a general from Croton in southern Italy. Croton had been at war with its neighbor, Locris, which relied in part on the divine support of the lesser Ajax, a hero of the Trojan War from Locris' namesake *polis* on the Greek mainland. When Leonymus is wounded in that war (attacking the frontlines specifically where Ajax is protecting them), he goes to Delphi, and is then sent by the Pythia to the "White Island," a mysterious earthly paradise at the mouth of the Danube, traditionally inhabited by heroes after their deaths. There, Leonymus meets *both* Ajaxes, as well as Achilles, Patroclus, Antilochus – and Helen, who relays the message of her wrath through Leonymus to Stesichorus (Pausanias 3.19.11.1–3.20.1.1).

The interpretation of this passage is controversial, with some arguing that it reflects a genuinely early tradition, and others arguing that it is a relatively late invention, designed to gloss the story of Stesichorus' blindness.[39] Whatever the truth of these accounts, they paint an interesting picture of the use of metonymic connections to mainland Greek cults by colonies in Italy, and, again, to the tensions between the Panhellenic and the epichoric. Whereas mainland Greek communities are able to employ autochthonous cults in their own defense, or to appropriate literally the cults of other communities,[40] colonies need

is often rejected on the grounds that this connection is a biographical reading of a fragment from Stesichorus' *Geryoneis* in which Pallantium is mentioned fr. 182 Page (= Pausanias 8.3.2, a passage simply recording Stesichorus' mention of the town, in the context of a general early history of Arcadian towns: Παλλαντίου μὲν δὴ καὶ Στησίχορος ὁ Ἱμεραῖος ἐν Γηρυονηίδι ἐποιήσατο μνήμην). See Podlecki 313 for a discussion of the passage.

[38] Conon, *Narrat. apud* Photius, *Bibl.* cod. 186, 18 (*FrGHist* 26 F1, 18); Hermias of Alexandria, schol. ad Plato, *Phaedrus* 243a.

[39] See, *inter alia*, Podlecki and Cingano, for the view that Pausanias' account represents an authentic tradition; for a more skeptical view see Leone.

[40] As with the Spartan capture of the bones of Orestes from Tegea. See Herodotus 1.65ff.

more elaborate strategies to insert themselves into the framework of Panhellenic myth. Most simply, they can do so by calling on the support of cults from mainland Greek allies, as the Italian Locrians do with the Dioscuri from Sparta and with Oilean Ajax from Opuntian Locris, their mother city. When this strategy is ineffective or unavailable, more elaborate approaches can be used, such as that taken by the Crotonians in calling on the Panhellenic advice of the Delphic oracle, and then on the translated epichoric cult of Achilles and Helen, located in a remote corner of the Black Sea. Moreover, the hint behind this anecdote is clearly that the *Palinode* is in some way connected to the Crotonian war effort; that is, that it represents an attempt to recruit the support of Helen for Croton. The tradition clearly suggests that any such efforts were fruitless; her own brothers gave strong support to the Italian Locrians, whose appeal to her central cult site of Sparta was always likely to be more effective, and in fact the Locrians seem to have won the war.

Nonetheless, this strange anecdote reminds us that the epichoric aspect of Greek cult was a far from simple matter. Heroes and gods could be worshipped in a multiplicity of forms and locations, from Sparta to the mouth of the Danube, and a particular location's association with a particular cult could be challenged or usurped. This is a manifestation in ritual of the multiformity we have seen associated with *etumoi logoi* in myth. What is an *etumos logos* for one community is *pseudês* for another; Panhellenic forces such as epic attempt to bring unity to this multiformity, but that attempt is itself subject to the challenge of not being an *etumos logos*. Finally, the epichoric itself can easily be an artificial construction, as we see in the appropriation of Helen and the Dioscuri by the Locrians and the Crotonians, where cities remote from the traditions of these heroes create new metonymic connections to old cults to establish their own position within a Panhellenic cultural environment.[41]

[41] This appropriation of mainland Greek traditions by Italian colonies is mirrored by the appropriation of early Zhou ritual by newly Sinified states in the Yangtze basin in the sixth century BC, a subject mentioned in the next three chapters. For the archaeological evidence, see, for example, Falkenhausen (2006) 262–3. On the constructed nature of the local, see the appendix to Chapter 5 on the constructed geography of the Chinese *Canon of Songs*.

P. Oxy. 2506 fr. 26 col. 1, 2–16: As Many Palinodes as You Please?

In 1963, with the publication of a papyrus fragment from Oxyrhynchus in Egypt, all earlier interpretations of the *Palinode* and its accompanying scene of authorship had to be reevaluated:

> . . . he challenges Homer [sc. in one *Palinode*], because Homer represents Helen at Troy, and not her *eidôlon*, and in the other one he challenges Hesiod. For there are two different palinodes, and the beginning of one of them is "Come here, goddess, delighting in music," whereas the other one begins "Golden-winged maiden," as Chamaeleon wrote. This same Stesichorus also says that although the *eidôlon* went to Troy, Helen herself remained with Proteus. And this is how he innovated in the story (*historia*), that while Demophon, the son of Theseus, on the return journey. . . .
>
> [μέμφεται τὸν Ὅμηρο[ν ὅτι Ἑλέ]νην ἐποίησεν ἐν Τ[ροίαι καὶ οὐ τὸ εἴδωλον αὐτῆ̃[ς, ἕν τε τ[ῆι] ἑτέραι τὸν Ἡσίοδ[ον μέμ[φετ]αι· διτταὶ γάρ εἰσι παλινωιδ ίαι δια λλάττουσαι, καὶ ἔστιν ἡ μὲν ἀρχή· δεῦρ᾽ αὖτε θεὰ φιλόμολπε, τῆς δέ· χρυσόπτερε παρθένε, ὡς ἀνέγραψε Χαμαιλέων· αὐτὸ[ς δ]έ φησ[ιν ὁ] Στησίχορο[ς τὸ μὲν ε[ἴδωλο]ν ἐλθεῖ[ν ἐς Τροίαν τὴν δ᾽Ἑλένην π[αρὰ τῶι Πρωτεῖ καταμεῖν[αι· οὕτως δὴ ἐκ[α]ινοποίησε τ[ὰς ἱστορ[ί]ας [ὥ]στε Δημοφῶντ[α μὲν τ[ὸ]ν Θησέως ἐν τ[ῶ]ι νόστωι με[τὰ] τῶν θε·[···]δων . . . (*P. Oxy.* 2506 fr. 26 col 1, 2–16)

This fragment has generated, and continues to generate, an enormous bibliography.[42] Some scholars continue to doubt the authenticity of this report,[43] whereas others have identified other, already known, passages that seem to suggest multiple palinodes, and that were interpreted otherwise until the publication of the Oxyrhynchus Papyrus.[44] The preponderance of scholarly opinion at this time seems to be in favor of the existence of two palinodes, but there is as yet no general consensus.[45] One point ignored by defenders of the two-palinode theory, though advanced by Austin in opposition to it, is that

[42] See Sider 423n1 for an already substantial bibliography, now nearly twenty years out of date.

[43] For a recent example, see Austin (1994) 102.

[44] See Cingano.

[45] The Chamaeleon to whom the discussion of the two palinodes is attributed, was a member of the Aristotelian school and the author of a treatise on Stesichorus in the third century BC, and thus a potentially reliable source, always provided of course that the anonymous grammarian in whose text we find this reference is himself a reliable transmitter of Chamaeleon. See Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 14.12.11 for Chamaeleon's *Peri tou Stêsichorou.*

the fragment from the *Palinode* found in the *Phaedrus* itself seems to represent the opening of the poem.[46] Recall from that passage

> But because he was *mousikos* he knew the cause, and *immediately* composed . . . and when he had created the *whole* of the so-called *Palinode*, he was *immediately* healed.
>
> ἀλλ᾽ ἅτε μουσικὸς ὢν ἔγνω τὴν αἰτίαν, καὶ ποιεῖ εὐθὺς – . . . καὶ ποιήσας δὴ πᾶσαν τὴν καλουμένην Παλινῳδίαν παραχρῆμα ἀνέβλεψεν.

In the absence of the testimony of the Oxyrhynchus Papyrus, the most plausible reading of this passage would certainly seem to be that it is characterizing the three lines of Plato's *Palinode* fragment as the opening three lines of the composition, the three lines created immediately upon his discovering the cause of his blindness. Given the Oxyrhynchus Papyrus, however, and given that that text offers us two other openings for Palinodes, should this mean that we have evidence for three, not two, Palinodes? If so, what would this mean?

I would like to offer a new interpretation, one that builds on the ideas of both Sider and d'Alfonso, discussed above, pertaining to the potentially performative aspect of Isocrates' description of the creation of the *Palinode*. The *Palinode*, like other Archaic lyric, was not simply a poetic text, but must have existed also, and at first principally, as an act of performance, including the dramatic use of gesture and dance. I suggest, then, that we might understand palinodes (in the plural) as a performative *genre*. As such, and as with any other oral poetic tradition, multiformity would have been an inevitable component of the genre. Rather than one, or two, or even three, palinodes, the palinode would then have been a performance practice, associated with the worship of Helen through the repudiation of the Panhellenic tradition concerning her. The oppositions between epichoric and Panhellenic, lyric and epic, *etumos logos* and *alêthês muthos*, which have governed our reading of both the *Palinode* itself and of the biographical traditions surrounding it, would be mythical refractions of what was performed in ritual. The matter is beyond proof, unless fuller texts of the palinodes were to emerge, but my conjecture has the advantage of accounting more thriftily for the materials we do have than any

[46] Austin 95.

theory that assumes that two of the three palinode fragments we have are inauthentic.

It is tempting, in this context, to imagine Plato as the author of his own *Palinode*, having composed a text uniquely suited to his own needs while working within an accepted tradition; it is suggestive that neither Isocrates nor any other source independent of Plato cites the verses he does. It is also striking that the two opening verses of the *Palinodes* cited by Chamaeleon use language suggestive of hymns, whereas the version given by Plato does not. Alternatively, Plato may have given us not the opening of the "authentic" *Palinode* but rather the opening of one of many *Palinodes*, and specifically the one whose language best suits his own agenda.

My theory of the *Palinode* as performance would render moot questions about what precisely Stesichorus does or does not say in his *Palinode* or *Palinodes*, and which portions of the *logos* of Helen are Stesichorean innovations, which borrowings from earlier traditions.[47] A multiplicity of palinodes might then have been projected onto the name of Stesichorus, in much the same way that I have argued fragmentary *prooimia* to citharody were attracted to the name of Terpander.[48]

If this is the case, then there is room for multiform accounts of Helen within the *Palinode* tradition, with the precise version recanted varying with time and context. This interpretation would also make more sense of the observation within our Oxyrhynchus fragment that one of the palinodes opposed Homer, and one Hesiod. We know the Homeric *logos* of Helen quite well from the epics, and in any event the Oxyrhynchus fragment tells us that this palinode challenges the Homeric claim that the real Helen went to Troy. It is much less clear what in a Hesiodic account would be refuted in a palinode. Independent evidence for the Hesiodic representation of Helen is scant and problematic. Perhaps the most convincing interpretation is that provided by Cingano, who suggests that Hesiod had Helen accompany Paris to Egypt, which would exonerate her from responsibility for the

[47] Again, see Sider for bibliography on the bewildering array of options considered by scholars.

[48] Beecroft (2008a).

Trojan War, but not from responsibility for her adultery, but the evidence for this interpretation is relatively slight, as Cingano himself acknowledges.[49]

If we view the *Palinode* as a performance genre, then we might imagine that one version (or some versions) of the *Palinode* tradition might well have contradicted some aspect of the Hesiodic tradition, and that that contradiction might well have been retrospectively condensed into a polemic against Hesiod. The generic relationship between Stesichorus, on the one hand, and Homer and Hesiod, on the other, is frequently represented using the biographical device of genealogy. An epigram from the first century BC poet Antipater of Thessalonica offers a Pythagorean reading of the relationship between Homer and Stesichorus:

> Stesichorus, the very full, measureless tongue of the Muse,
> buried in the ground, dark with sooty ashes, of Catania,
> In whose breast, according to the Pythagorean prophecy of nature, dwelt
> A second time the soul that had been Homer's before.
>
> Στασίχορον, ζαπληθὲς ἀμέτρητον στόμα Μούσης,
> ἐκτέρισεν Κατάνας αἰθαλόεν δάπεδον,
> οὗ, κατὰ Πυθαγόρεω φυσικὰν φάτιν, ἁ πρὶν Ὁμήρου
> ψυχὰ ἐνὶ στέρνοις δεύτερον ᾠκίσατο. (Anthologia Palatina, 7.75)

There was in fact a lively tradition of anecdotes associating Stesichorus with the Pythagoreans, hardly surprising given the geographic and chronological proximity of the two traditions.[50] From our perspective, this epigram is more interesting as a theorization of a relationship between the Stesichorean and Homeric traditions. The connection, based largely on thematic overlaps, was a familiar one in the ancient world. We have already seen from the Oxyrhynchus fragment that the connection could be viewed as rivalrous; a perhaps less contentious

[49] Cingano 32, where he discusses the scholion to Lycophron *Alexandra* 822 (fr. Hes. 358 Merkelbach-West), which suggests that it was Hesiod who first introduced the idea of the *eidôlon* into the story of Helen. As Cingano argues, a plausible inference would be that Stesichorus' objection in the anti-Hesiodic *Palinode* will be to the idea that Helen went even as far as Egypt.

[50] West (1971) 302–4.

version is offered by Quintilian, who characterizes Stesichorus as "sustaining the burden of epic songs on his lyre," *epici carminis onera lyra sustinentem* (*Institutio Oratoria* 10.1.62). Plato's account of the blindness of Stesichorus seems to value that poet more highly than Homer, whereas Quintilian (as an example) claims that Stesichorus' poetry is inferior to Homer's, in that it "overflows and is poured out," *redundat atque effunditur*, an expression whose own redundancy iconically reproduces Quintilian's critique. Antipater's epigram is another way of imagining this relationship between Homer and Stesichorus and the close relationship between their two traditions. Two bodies housing a single soul serve as a metaphor for two (closely related) metrical systems conveying a shared (if sometimes conflicting) mythical tradition. The use of reincarnation would also provide a Sicilian twist on the standard biographic device of poetic genealogy we have seen deployed so many times already.

The relationship between Stesichorus and Hesiod, more opaque to us, seems no less important to the Greeks. A strange tradition, somewhat erratically attested, tells the story of the death of Hesiod. The tale emerges in fragments. Thucydides tells us that a tradition in Opuntian Locris maintained that Hesiod died there, but he tells us no more (Thucydides 3.96.1). The *Contest between Homer and Hesiod*, a text that I discuss in Chapter 2 as a *Life of Homer*, informs us that the reason for Hesiod's death was that he had illicit sexual relations with the daughter of Phegeus of Locris, and that her brothers Amphiphanis and Galuctor killed Hesiod in revenge (*Certamen* 342–44). In some versions of this story, the girl kills herself in shame, but in others, she bears a son – Stesichorus. One such version was, apparently, reported in the lost Aristotelian *Constitution of the Orchomenans*.[51]

The truth value of this anecdote, whether it is *alêthês* or not, is obviously moot for us. What is significant about it is that it appears to have been *etumos*, at least within Orchomenos. Within this specific local context, one we have already seen as significant for the understanding of Stesichorean poetry, the relationship between the Hesiodic and

[51] Aristotle, *Fragmenta Varia*, 8.44.565. See West (1971) 304, for a discussion of these pieces of evidence, which, for him, suggest mostly that the poetry of both Stesichorus and Hesiod was known to the Locrians.

Stesichorean traditions was made very concrete and literal. Again, this anecdote would mean a great deal more to us if we knew more about how Hesiod imagined the story of Helen, but we know enough from Chamaeleon to know that the relationship of the different versions of that story at least was problematic. There is a tension between imagining the lyric tradition as borrowing epic themes, and elaborating them in the terms of its own conventions, and imagining lyric as challenging Panhellenic epic. The *logos* of Stesichorus as the bastard child of Hesiod, born of adultery and revenge, brilliantly concretizes both the notion of lineage and that of rivalry. Further, we must recall at this point that Terpander was seen, in various traditions, as the son of Homer or of Hesiod as well.[52] Once again, the qualities associated with citharodic poets are substitutable, with each member of the genealogy capable of assuming the traits of the others. Genealogy becomes a metonymic system by which the relationships between literary genres can be understood.

Everything we have seen, then, about the *Palinode* (or palinodes), and about the associated story of Stesichorus' blindness, bears to some degree on the question of the relationship of epic to lyric. The *Palinode* fragment reported by Plato itself defines its subject as the opposite of epic, proclaiming, in effect, that the entire Troy tale is false in terms of local cult and local lyric traditions (however that "locality" is understood). Plato and Isocrates, in describing the *Palinode* and Stesichorus' blindness, use both as figures to represent the relationship between epic and lyric as part of a larger argument of their own. Herodotus, learning the story of Helen's sojourn in Egypt from an epichoric (albeit non-Hellenic) source, goes on to suggest that the entire epic tradition is based on a false assumption knowingly made by Homer, whereas Pausanias reports to us a deployment of varying local traditions surrounding epic heroes for specific political purposes. Finally, the commentary preserved for us in Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 2506 conjures up two new palinodes for us, each even more explicitly anti-epic than before. Whether he is Homer reincarnate or Hesiod's bastard child, whether these *logoi* are *etumoi* or not, it is impossible to understand the

[52] See Suda τ 354.

Palinode or Stesichorus' blindness except in terms of the epic tradition to which they (do not) belong.

This generic rivalry, as we have also seen, is consistently mapped onto a rivalry between the epichoric and the Panhellenic. The *Palinode* seems to represent itself, and others represent it, as an epichoric response to the ultimate Panhellenic narrative, the charter-myth of Helen's abduction and recovery in the Trojan War. As I have suggested, and as Plato, Isocrates, and Herodotus remind us, the ideological stakes in such a response are high indeed. The notion of Panhellenic cultural unity derives to a significant extent from Homeric epic, and to reject Helen's abduction as genuine is thus to reject the foundational narrative which makes the Greek world whole. If it is poetry that unites the Greeks, it is also poetry that can divide them. As we turn now to the early Chinese tradition, I will show that the stakes are just as high in the charter-myths of the Panhuaxia, and in the means of their telling.

5

Death and Lingerie

Cosmopolitan and Panhuaxia Readings of the Airs of the States

Indexicality and Interpretation

In the previous chapter's discussion of the *Palinode* of Stesichorus, we saw how the demonstrative pronoun *houtos* in the first line of Plato's *Palinode* fragment had the effect of making the narrative to which it referred vividly present to its audience.[1] This capacity of language to point to objects, individuals, and even narratives, and to indicate the relationship of its referent to the context of discourse, falls under the category of language identified as "indexical" by Charles Peirce;[2] the meaning of such language is always context-dependent. Pronouns, demonstratives, articles, and time words are among the most obvious of indexical linguistic categories; "I," "you," and "she" clearly have radically different meanings depending on when, where, and why they are being uttered, as do words such as "this," "here," and "now".

Proper names can also be indexical, because they indicate an individual within a group; outside the group, the name becomes meaningless. Anthropologists identify two distinct goals for naming systems: referring to individuals (that is, working indexically to distinguish one person from another), and addressing individuals (that is, situating that individual within a social system using naming patterns that require cultural knowledge to interpret; in other words, acting as

[1] The discussion in the previous chapter summarizes Beecroft (2006); on *houtos*, see Bakker (1999a).

[2] Peirce (1991).

symbolic signs in Peircean terms). As Joel Kuipers in particular has shown with respect to the Weyewa culture of the Indonesian island of Sumba, the disappearance of traditional cultural knowledge can move a naming system from address to reference, from symbolic to indexical.[3] Traditional Weyewa names interpellate individuals as parents (with names like *inna Lende*, "mother of Lende,"), make use of honorifics, or identify the person as part of a relational system (such as the practice of addressing someone sharing one's name as *tamo*, "namesake"). As a result of conversion to Christianity and education in Indonesian-language public schools, the use of Christian names has increased, and previous honorific naming practices are now restricted to racehorses, share-taxis, and businesses. The address-function of naming has been eclipsed in favor of the reference-function demanded by the state for statistical, taxation, and security purposes.[4]

This process of "indexicalization"[5] can have radically transformative effects, not only on naming systems, but also on performance practices as they become texts: first by creating the expectation that the text has a stable referent, and then through the awareness that that referent is unknown. Indexicalization creates a crisis of interpretation. To recall Aristotle's claim that *mimêsis* is the recognition that a performed "this" *houtos* is equivalent to a reenacted "that" *ekeinos*, with indexicalization not only is *ekeinos* lost, but the nature of the link between *houtos* and *ekeinos* is misunderstood. As Aristotle suggests, this can lead to a situation in which a text is appreciated for its formal features, but not for its mimetic qualities. The problems inherent in the use of indexical language in writing can compound these problems. The phrase "I love you" is profoundly meaningful when performed, and the addressee is usually clear; encountered as graffiti, the reader's inability to resolve the indexical reference of the pronouns voids the statement of content. Rather than the limitless possible referents of performance, textuality implies a single, stable referent. Certain literary forms, especially narrative, effectively establish the identity of that referent; others, such as lyric, are less able to do so, and, as I have

[3] Kuipers (1998) 95–124.
[4] Kuipers (1998) 124.
[5] Kuipers (1998) 96.

argued in the Greek chapters of this book, one of the major functions of the scene of authorship is to provide a narrative frame within which the indexical language of a poem can be understood.[6]

The role played by indexicalization in the interpretation of the earliest Chinese poetry, the *Canon of Songs*, will be the main focus of this chapter, but in discussing that subject I make use of two theoretical models, drawn from anthropology and from classics, that will help with my discussion of indexicalization and textualization. The anthropologist of religion Roy Rappaport draws on Peirce's categories of indexical and symbolic signs in his model of the social function of religion. According to Rappaport, ritual contains two kinds of messages, the canonical and the self-referential.[7] Canonical elements of ritual are those elements that are transmitted, but not encoded, by the participants.[8] They are the invariant messages of a ritual, such as the larger philosophical or ideological statements that occasion it. In contrast, self-referential messages are those transmitted *and* encoded by participants in a specific performance of a ritual. These messages typically make statements or claims about the status of specific individuals within the social order constituted by the ritual. An initiation ritual, for example, might contain canonical information about the social structure, such as charter-myths of the community or clan, but will also contain self-referential information – such as the fact that a particular initiate has attained manhood or womanhood.[9]

A structurally similar model is offered by the Greek concept of the *ainos* or "code that carries the right message for those who are qualified and the wrong message or messages for those who are unqualified."[10] In the context of the praise-poetry of Pindar, Nagy explains the function of the *ainos* as a mode of discourse where only an audience who possess the necessary decoding skills, ethical education, and personal connection to the subject matter of the poem will be able to unravel its

[6] This is not to forget the important work on the anthropology of reading in the ancient world done by Jesper Svenbro, who demonstrated that written texts frequently require the reader to become their speaking subject, and frequently play with the tension between the speaker's real identity and the identity forced on him by the act of reading (Svenbro 1993).

[7] Rappaport (1999) 52–3.

[8] Rappaport (1999) 52.

[9] Rappaport (1999) 91ff.

[10] Nagy (1990b) 148.

elliptical or obscure delivery. Features such as mythological content, references to ancestors, and the use of key words or phrases produce meaning from the *ainos* – but only for those who possess the requisite skills; for those in the audience who are unable to interpret the *ainos* the poem becomes an *ainigma* (the origin of our English word "enigma"): that is, it transmits either the wrong meaning, or no meaning at all.[11] What is said in the context of praise-poetry may also be said, *mutatis mutandis*, of blame-poetry, both categories that are central to interpretation of the *Canon of Songs*.[12]

As Nagy observes, "occasionality is the essence of *ainos*";[13] that is, the praise or blame that is delivered in the form of an *ainos* is specific to a particular performance-context (though it will of course draw on and form a part of a long tradition of praise- or blame-poetry). This notion of occasionality is in many ways analogous to Rappaport's "self-referential" function of ritual, although crucially it acknowledges the possibility of communicative failure, which we might see as a species of infelicity in the Austinian sense.[14] The end of occasionality, that is, the processes of indexicalization and textualization, tends to evacuate textualized ritual of its self-referential content; the texts become predominantly or exclusively canonical, indexical, and enigmatic.

We have seen this phenomenon at work in the biographical narratives of Greek poets; Stesichorus, Terpander, and even Homer function there not so much as individuals at whom biographical episodes point, but more as positions within a culturally bound system of meaning that gives value to particular texts and kinds of texts through their relationship to a larger textual and cultural system. As the Greeks moved from performance traditions to texts, from multiformity to textual fixation, the status of the poet as the author of a poem's canonical, indexical function became more important that the poem's capacity for self-referential reenactment in performance. In the Chinese chapters that follow, I move this discussion from the level of biographical narrative to the level of the texts themselves, and to the roles played by

[11] Nagy (1990b) 149, with specific reference to Theognis 681–2.

[12] See Nagy (1990b) 149 on morphological similarities between praise- and blame-poetry, and also 392–3 on Archilochus and Pindar as poets who combine elements of both in their poetry.

[13] Nagy (1990b) 150.

[14] Austin (1962).

indexicalization and textualization in the construction of scenes of authorship for the *Canon of Songs*.

The *Canon of Songs* and Indexicalization

A preliminary sense of the issues at stake in indexicalization with the *Canon of Songs* can be gained by examining the four (out of roughly 300) poems in the *Canon* with named authors. One of these four poems (a blame-poem) seems, like Homeric epic, to efface its author even as it names him:

> The eldest eunuch composed this poem, so that all the lords might listen attentively.
>
> 寺人孟子・作爲此詩・凡百君子・敬而聽之・ *Canon of Songs* 200, The Superintendent of the Inner Hallway 巷伯 (p. 428)

The poet identifies himself in the poem's final line by his (humble) rank, rather than by name, with address rather than reference. Not only can any individual holding the title of "eldest eunuch" take on the dramatic role here, but so can any performer of the poem, for it is a situational role rather than a legal identity, and the target of his complaint can also shift with each performance. The other three poems with named poets present us with individuals. A Jifu 吉父 identifies himself as the author of *Songs* 259 and 260, 崧高 (*High are the lofty mountains*, p. 669) and 烝民 (*The numerous people*, p. 674), whereas a Jiafu 家父 does the same for *Song* 191, 節南山 (*The crests of the southern mountains*, p. 393). Unusually for the *Songs*, these three poems are historical narratives in their own right, each seemingly composed by an elite individual.[15] Although in both cases we can identify named individuals as plausible authors,[16] there is still a form of authorial self-effacement at work; Jiafu is a title rather than a name. Again we find address instead of reference.

[15] *Songs* 259 recounts a war fought by King Xuan, around 821 BC, whereas 260 celebrates the diplomatic mission of the Zhou minister Zhong Shanfu to Qi at around the same time (Li (2006) 135–7). *Songs* 191 discusses the dismissal of a man named Huangfu ("The August Father") as Grand Marshal by King You in 777 BC, an event likely connected to the collapse of the Western Zhou in 771 (Li (2006) 203–15).

[16] On Jifu, see esp. Li (2006) 135–7; on Jiafu, see Li (2006) 203–15.

Apart from these few poems, the remainder of the *Canon of Songs* lack internally named authors, making the sort of self-effacement I discuss above moot. Moreover, due to the Ruist ideology with which the *Canon of Songs* came to be associated after its adoption by the state during the Western Han, by which the *Songs* were mostly held to be popular creations of the common people collected by officials in order to discern the political mood of the times, there was an all-purpose scene of authorship that diminished the significance of more specific scenes designed for specific poems. The further Ruist claim that Confucius edited the classics provided a "scene of editorship" sufficient to obviate the need for scenes of (compositional) authorship for the *Songs*.[17] Therefore, whereas Greek scenes of authorship needed to account for the relationships between genres and the production and circulation of texts, Ruist ideology tended to create scenes of authorship that connected given poems to the Panhuaxia concerns of the late Zhou, or to the cosmopolitan concerns of the Han.

Because in the Han the dominant ideology of interpretation came to be inextricably linked to claims of imperial political legitimacy, there was a complex relationship between the epichoric and the Panhuaxia. Parts of the *Canon of Songs*, such as the *Court Songs* and the *Hymns*, were understood as remnants of an idealized Panhuaxia past, a subject I discuss in Chapter 7. The *Airs of the States*, associated with the Spring and Autumn era and the early Warring States and with specific epichoric contexts in the regional states, presented particular challenges for Panhuaxia and cosmopolitan reading strategies.[18] The Panhuaxia era tended toward scenes that freed the poems from their epichoric origins to circulate as Panhuaxia signifiers, through reperformance of a given poem in a new context, where it served as a means of commentary on a new political situation; when the poem's epichoricity was shifted from its point of origin, the poem entered the shared cultural language of Panhuaxia culture. The cosmopolitan era of the Mao commentaries, by contrast, preferred to link poems to

[17] See Chapter 2 for the Peisistratean recension as a scene of editorship for Homeric epic, a scene that did not supplant the scenes of authorship surrounding the figure of Homer.

[18] See the excursus at the end of this chapter on the relationships between the states mentioned in the *Airs of the States* and the actual political mapping of the Huaxia world.

specific historical anecdotes, especially where the link was productive from the perspective of moral education.

Recent evidence has contributed to our understanding that the earliest phases of that moralizing practice did not need to link poems to an epichoric origin, a phenomenon that I will illustrate with an example concerning the first poem in the collection, naturally enough the poem with the greatest programmatic significance for the collection as a whole:

"Guanguan" cry the fishhawks
On the banks of the river.
The chaste, unaroused girl
Is a good match for the gentleman.

The amaranth grows irregularly
To the left and right we catch it.
The chaste, unaroused girl –
Asleep and awake I seek her.

I seek and do not get her,
Asleep and awake I think of her.
Alas! Alas!
I toss and turn on back and side.

The amaranth grows irregularly
To the left and right we gather it.
The chaste, unaroused girl –
Lute and zither befriend her.

The amaranth grows irregularly
To the left and right we pick it.
The chaste, unaroused girl –
Bell and drum delight her.

關關雎鳩・在河之洲・窈窕淑女・君子好逑・
參差荇菜・左右流之・窈窕淑女・寤寐求之・
求之不得・寤寐思服・悠哉悠哉・輾轉反側・
參差荇菜・左右采之・窈窕淑女・琴瑟友之・
參差荇菜・左右芼之・窈窕淑女・鐘鼓樂之・

'Guan!' Cry the Fishhawks 關雎
(*Songs* 1; p. 20)

A recent archaeological find, the recently discovered *Confucius' Discussion of the* Songs (孔子詩論), which likely dates from around

375 BC,[19] and thus represents the earliest known text in Chinese poetics, offers the following comments on *'Guan!' Cry the Fishhawks*:[20]

'Guan!' Cry the Fishhawks is harmonious, thus its thought is beneficial. . . . *'Guan!' Cry the Fishhawks* uses sensuality to discuss ritual. . . .

關雎之怡, 則其思賹. . . . 關雎以色喻禮. . . .

The Mao commentary, which emerges in the Han, perhaps around 150 BC,[21] and which will gradually become the orthodox interpretation of the *Songs*, glosses the poem much more precisely as praise for the wife of the first king of the Zhou, and (as the lower levels of commentary tell us) specifically for her zeal and discretion in choosing girls as concubines for her husband: *'Guan!' Cry the Ospreys* celebrates the virtue of the Queen Consort (of King Wen) (關雎 · 后妃之德也 ·). Leaving aside the oddity of that interpretation of the poem, what is most striking about the transition from the one passage to the other is the move toward indexicalization; where *Confucius' Discussion of the* Songs represents the poem in abstract terms, suitable for insertion into different self-referential contexts, the Mao preface is instead interested in fixing the canonical context (for its own cosmopolitan purposes, be it said), and therefore in indexicalizing the poem's reference.

This move is typical of the Mao preface, as we shall see over the following three chapters. The fourth century BC historical text the *Zuozhuan*, I will argue, represents an earlier Panhuaxia model of the scene of authorship (similar perhaps to that in *Confucius' Discussion of the* Songs), where the focus is around the self-referential deployment of the *Songs* in specific contexts as part of a shared Panhuaxia language of cultural practice. These self-referential episodes accumulate in the *Zuozhuan*, and come to contribute to the *Songs*' canonical significance as well. At the same time, the deployment of the poem enhances the canonical significance of the historical episode, creating a mutually reinforcing system of poem and anecdote. The goal of these poem–anecdote systems is not merely to give meaning to (admittedly often obscure) poems, but in fact to create a totalizing system of interpretation and of behavior, which had as its goals first the guiding

[19] This text is preserved as a bamboo manuscript in the Chu script. We have encountered the text briefly in Chapter 1. For the text, see Ma (2001). For the dating, see Liu (2003) 3.

[20] Following the glosses and transcriptions offered by Ma (2001) 139–41.

[21] Lewis (1999) 173.

of interstate relations in the Panhuaxia world of the Warring States, and later the maintenance of cosmopolitan imperial hegemony during the Han. This chapter's discussion will concentrate on an episode that explains the value of the *Airs* in the cosmopolitan context, whereas the chapter that follows will move backward to examine the representation of the deployment of the *Airs* in a Panhuaxia context.

The Woods of Zhu and *The Pond Shore*

The systems of interpretation I discuss are applied to the entire *Canon of Songs* in our commentarial traditions; my choice of poems is therefore somewhat arbitrary. In this chapter, I concentrate on two poems, the tenth and eleventh from the Airs of Chen, which is in turn one of the sections of the *Airs of the States* within the *Canon of Songs*:

What is he doing in the Woods of Zhu?
He is going after Xia Nan.
It is not that he is going to the Woods of Zhu.
He is going after Xia Nan.

"Yoke me my team of horses,
I will spend the night in the Outskirts of Zhu.
I will ride my team of colts,
And I will have breakfast at Zhu."

胡為株林・從夏南・匪適株林・從夏南・
駕我乘馬・說于株野・乘我乘駒・朝食于株・

The Woods of Zhu 株林 (*Songs* 144; p. 255)

On the shores of this pond
There are cattails and lotus plants.
There is a beautiful person,[22]
What can I do?[23]
Awake and asleep I accomplish nothing,
The tears and snivel descend like rain.

On the shores of this pond
There are cattails and orchids.
There is a beautiful person,

[22] There is no way to unambiguously assign a gender to the person (or people) referred to in this line and the corresponding lines in the other stanzas.

[23] Following Wang in taking the Lu and Han readings, by which the 傷 in this line is (based on the *Erya*) equivalent to 予, which would function as a first person singular pronoun. If this reading is rejected, then the line will read, "I am hurt! What can I do?"

Large and tall and handsome.
Awake and asleep, I accomplish nothing,
My innermost heart is fretful.

On the shores of this pond
There are cattails and lotus blossoms.
There is a beautiful person,
Large and tall and impressive.
Awake and asleep I accomplish nothing,
Tossing and turning, with my face on the pillow.

彼澤之陂・有蒲與荷・有美一人・傷如之何・
寤寐無為・涕泗滂沱・
彼澤之陂・有蒲與簡・有美一人・碩大且卷・
寤寐無為・中心悁悁・
彼澤之陂・有蒲菡萏・有美一人・碩大且儼・
寤寐無為・輾轉伏枕・

The Pond Shore 澤陂 (*Songs* 145; p. 256)

The Mao school identifies these two poems as among the last-written among the *Airs of the States*, claiming that they refer to events that took place at the court of the state of Chen in 599 BC, only a few decades before the birth of Confucius:[24]

The Woods of Zhu critiques Duke Ling (of Chen). He committed adultery with Xia Ji, hastening to be with her, day and night without rest.

株林, 刺靈公也, 淫乎夏姬, 驅馳而往, 朝夕不休息焉・

The Pond Shore critiques its era. It tells that Duke Ling, his lords and ministers were sexually depraved in his state. Men and women found delight in one another, but it made them pensive and broken-hearted.

澤陂, 刺時也・言靈公君臣淫於其國, 男女相說, 憂思感傷焉・

I will return to the specific context established by the Mao glosses,[25] but in order to understand them a brief political background is in

[24] An unpublished manuscript by Stephen Owen, "The Historical Imagination in the Interpretation of the Poems," from his *Essays on Ancient Literature*, examines this episode in terms of narrative styles, as a means of drawing a distinction between explanatory anecdote as history, (fluid) story, and (relatively fixed) narrative, a distinction that is necessary to understanding the sorts of materials I shall be examining below.

[25] I have already mentioned the three alternative "schools" of *Songs* interpretation, the Qi, Lu, and Han. For the surviving fragments, see Wang (1987); we know that the Qi reading of *The Woods of Zhu* was broadly similar, whereas we have no readings

order. Chen, a moderate-sized state located in what is now the eastern part of Henan province, was one of the few states whose ruling house was not of the same Ji 姬 lineage as the Zhou royal house. The Chen ruling family instead claimed descent from the Gui 嬀 lineage, associated with the mythical sage-emperor Shun; a latter-day descendant of the lineage, the potter Gui Man 嬀滿, was apparently established in Chen by King Wen at the start of the Zhou dynasty. Although Henan is today in north central China, the state of Chen was in its own time on the southeastern frontier of the Huaxia world, roughly adjacent to the non-Huaxia state of Chu. Chen was a frequent ally of the much more powerful state of Chu, having notably fought (unsuccessfully) at Chu's side in the crucial Battle of Chengpu in 631, which temporarily halted Chu's rise to hegemony. A few decades later, Duke Ling of Chen was to participate in a strange episode of transvestitism, adultery, and murder, the inspiration for the Mao commentary's interpretation of our two poems:

> Duke Ling of Chen, along with Kong Ning and Yi Hangfu (two of his ministers) all had relations with Xia Ji. They all wore pieces of her undergarments as their own, as a joke at court. Xie Ye reproached them, saying, "When the duke and ministers announce their licentiousness, the people have no educational influence from them. The reputation of this deed is not good, so please discard the garment, my lord." The duke replied, "I am able to improve." But he told the two ministers, and they asked permission to kill Xie Ye. The duke did not prevent them from doing so, and accordingly Xie Ye was murdered. Confucius said, "Where the *Canon of Songs* says, 'The people have much depravity, do not establish your own depravity,' this is what Xie Ye was saying."[26]
>
> 陳靈公與孔寧、儀行父、通於夏姬, 皆衷其衵服, 以戲於朝。洩冶諫曰, 公卿宣淫, 民無效焉, 且聞不令, 君其納之。公曰, 吾能改矣。公告二子, 二子請殺之, 公非禁, 遂殺洩冶。孔子曰, 詩云, 民之多辟, 無自立辟, 其洩冶謂乎。(*Zuozhuan*, Duke Xuan 9 [599 BC] p. 380)

for the Lu and Han, and none from any of the three for *The Pond Shore*. Other manuscripts, discovered recently by archaeologists, offer comments on various of the *Songs*, although unfortunately none discuss the poems I discuss in this book. I have already mentioned several times "*Confucius' Discussion of the* Songs;" other relevant archaeological texts include the Shuanggudui bamboo-strip fragments (see Hu and Han (1988)), the Mawangdui silk manuscript known as the *Five Forms of Conduct* (五行) (see Ikeda (1993)), and the Guodian *Black Robes* (緇衣) (see Jingmen shi bowuguan (1998)), a variant on the text of that title in the received *Record of Rites*.

[26] See below for a discussion of this quotation.

The dénouement of this episode, as it were, is found in the entry for the following year:

Duke Ling of Chen, together with Kong Ning and Yi Hangfu, drank at the home of the Xia family. The duke said to Hangfu, "Zhengshu[27] resembles you!" Hangfu replied, "He also resembles your lordship!" Zhengshu took these remarks amiss. As the duke was exiting from the stable, Zhengshu shot him with his bow and killed him. The two officers fled to Chu.

陳靈公與孔寧、儀行父、飲酒於夏氏。公謂行父曰, 徵舒似女。對曰, 亦似君。徵舒病之。公出,自其廄射而殺之。二子奔楚。(*Zuozhuan*, Duke Xuan, Year 10 [598 BC] p. 382)

This anecdote has a certain undeniable appeal from a moralistic perspective: a wicked ruler and his wicked advisers are punished by a virtuous official. As such, it is hardly surprising that the Mao commentarial tradition would choose to draw on this episode in interpreting the *Songs*. But why is it that the Mao school uses *these* two songs, associating them with this strange story? What clues within the poems prompt this reading? To begin with, the poem contains two proper names, Xia Nan and the Woods of Zhu. In a writing-based cultural environment, where names are used for reference rather than for address, these proper names should have an indexical function, and it should in principle be possible to attach the names to a person and a place, respectively. Moreover, it is clear that such identifications are the keys to interpreting the poem; without some resolution of the poem's indexical reference, the text itself has little to offer.

Most traditional scholars equated the Xia Nan of the poem with Xia Zhengshu 夏徵舒, the son of the Xia Ji of the first part of the anecdote, she herself the widow of the high Chen official Xia Yushu 夏御叔. The poem would then be a veiled criticism of Duke Ling, coyly suggesting that he has gone to Zhulin to visit Xia Zhengshu, when in fact he is there to pursue a sexual relationship with Xia Ji, Xia Zhengshu's mother. The evidence that the name Xia Nan in the poem refers to the same person as Xia Zhengshu is another passage in the *Zuozhuan*, in which Duke Wuchen of Shen advises an official from the state of Chu named Zifan not to marry Xia Ji:

Wuchen said, "She is an inauspicious person. She caused Ziman to die young, killed Yushu (i.e., her husband), assassinated Marquis Ling, had Xia Nan

[27] The son of Xia Ji.

executed, expelled Kong [and] Yi, and destroyed Chen. How could anyone be more inauspicious than her?"

巫臣曰・是不祥人也・是夭子蠻・殺御叔・弒靈侯・戮夏南・出孔儀・喪陳國・何不祥如是・(*Zuozhuan*, Duke Zheng 2, [589 BC] p. 428)

If the traditional commentaries were correct, Ziman would be Xia Ji's elder brother, Duke Ling of Zheng, killed after one year in office; Yushu is clearly her husband Xia Yushu. Marquis Ling would presumably be the Duke Ling of Chen who sports her undergarments in our own anecdote, not the Duke Ling of Zheng who is Xia Ji's brother and has already been disposed of two clauses earlier. Xia Nan is presumed to be her son, Xia Zhengshu, whereas Kong and Yi are identifiable as the ministers Kong Ning and Yi Hangfu of our anecdote. Things are not quite as simple as that, however; the only other time Duke Ling of Zheng is mentioned in the *Zuozhuan*, we are told that he was in fact killed by two of his relatives, Zigong and Zijia, in a complex set of plots and counterplots escalating out of the Duke's refusal to allow Zijia to consume any of a rare dish of turtle (Duke Xuan 4, [605 BC] p. 368).[28] There is no suggestion that Xia Ji was involved in that death nor any suggestion that Duke Ling of Zheng was also known as Ziman (other than late references in the commentaries to the *Zuozhuan*).

Further, it is only in the post-Han commentaries that we see the claim that the Xia Nan of this passage is in fact Xia Zhengshu, and even so that is not definitive proof that the Xia Nan of this passage is also the Xia Nan of *The Woods of Zhu*. Moreover, the Xia family was a powerful ministerial family in the state of Chen, and male members of the family of several different generations could have been identified by the name Xia Nan, which serves as a term of address as much as a term of reference. The Mao interpretation of the poem sets up a complex chain of indexicality: the coy reference to the Woods of Zhu points to the real purpose of the visit, Xia Nan, except that Xia Nan as a name points to the figure otherwise known as Xia Zhengshu, who in turn points toward his mother Xia Ji.[29] Place stands for name, which stands for man, which stands for woman.

[28] On this episode, see Schaberg (2001) 176–9. We will encounter Zijia again, at greater length, in Chapter 6.

[29] Xia Ji's own name is a form of address rather than of reference. The family name Xia is the name of her husband's family, whereas Ji, the name of the Zhou clan, indicates that her father was of that clan. In other words, Xia Ji's name identifies her

We are faced with similar uncertainties with regard to the toponym Zhulin, which the commentators identify as the familial fief-city of the Xia family. To begin with, it is unclear whether the toponym should be Zhulin, or simply Zhu, with the *lin* 林 ("woods") simply acting as an equivalent to the *ye* 野 ("wilds") in the second verse, in both cases indicating the uncultivated outskirts of the city.[30] Furthermore, the only evidence we have that Zhu (or Zhulin) was the seat of the Xia family comes from the commentaries on the *Canon of Songs* – when the *Zuozhuan* comments on the location of the fateful dinner, it says only "at the Xia family ['s residence]" 於夏氏. The nineteenth-century philologist Chen Huan, who accepts Zhulin as the seat of the Xia family, cites in his discussion of this poem the second stanza of the poem itself, in which it is said that Xia Nan eats and spends the night in the wilds of Zhu, as his sole evidence to support that traditional claim.[31] The evidence, therefore, that has been traditionally used to link the poem to the historical anecdote can be shown to rely in circular fashion on the poem itself as the only evidence. If the connection between historical anecdote and poem seems circular and unconvincing here, where the anecdote is so comparatively late, and where the text of the poems actually includes proper names, then our confidence in other connections made, to earlier events and for poems without proper names of any sort, must be weaker still.

The second poem we began with, *The Pond Shore*, is even less directly linked to the incident involving Duke Ling of Chen, and in fact its position in the sequence of the *Airs of Cheng* (immediately following *The Woods of Zhu*) seems largely responsible for this connection. Nonetheless, the connection to Duke Ling remains secure in the minds of major commentators until Dai Zhen in the eighteenth century.[32] This poem thus provides a useful reminder of how the scenes of authorship developed in the commentarial tradition work; useless from our perspective as a way of understanding the poem itself, they are nonetheless extremely useful as a means of access to the interpretations provided by the tradition, and to the values underlying those interpretations.

positionally, as born into one clan and married into another, and would be used for any woman in the same position.

[30] See Ma (2001) 517 for the latter argument.

[31] Chen Huan (1995a) p. 162.

[32] Zhang (1993) 1166.

Deciding how to connect this poem to the anecdote, however, proved more challenging than was the case with our first poem. We have no proper names here that could be connected to historical figures. The text of the poem seems to describe the experience of unrequited love – a popular subject for lyric poetry everywhere, but not easily associated with our particular story. Three possibilities emerged within the scholarly tradition, and I will examine them in turn.

The first possibility is that proposed by the Mao school, as expressed in the preface to this poem reproduced above; although the preface does identify Duke Ling, it leaves the remainder of the context unspoken. Later commentators amplify these remarks, filling in the details that the "ministers" the Mao preface refers to are the Kong Ning and Yi Xingfu of the *Zuozhuan* passage. According to this reading, the poem depicts the sorts of assignations that were carried out under the lax moral regime of Duke Ling, or possibly the assignations of the Duke and his ministers themselves. The "beautiful person" of each stanza would then be Xia Ji, and the poem would reprovingly describe, in turn, the longing each of the three men felt for her. This reading accounts for the unrequited love theme of the poem by characterizing it as a punishment that men such as Duke Ling and his ministers suffer as a consequence of their depravity. No attempt is made to explain the authorship or compositional context for the poem.

The twelfth-century scholar Wang Zhi 王質 (1127–89) read the "beautiful person" of each of the three stanzas as Xie Ye 泄冶, the virtuous minister of Cheng who upbraided Duke Ling for his improprieties, and died as a result.[33] This reading accounts for the unrequited longing of the poem, not by assigning to it an object of erotic interest, but rather by interpreting it as a civic desire for worthy ministers, and by implication critiquing Duke Ling for his conduct and his inability to recognize and employ worthy subjects. Such a reading, in which relationships between ruler and minister are described in erotic terms, may seem counterintuitive in a modern and Western context, but were entirely conventional, at least in Wang Zhi's time.

The seventeenth-century scholar He Kai 何楷 (fl. 1625) reads the poem as delivered in the voice of Xia Ji, and the "beautiful people" of the three stanzas as, in turn, the three men she had relations with.

[33] *Apud* Zhang (1993) 1165.

He interprets the poem as boastful, with Xia Ji celebrating the handsomeness of each of her three lovers. By Ruist standards, so blatant an expression of female desire (especially by a widow) would seem strikingly immoral. A poem on these lines, indeed, could only be admissible to the Ruist canon if interpreted as a critique of its own narrative voice, and He Kai accordingly suggests that the poem was composed by someone representing (代為) Xia Ji's voice for satiric purposes.[34]

These three readings maintain the connection between poem and anecdote, but in very different ways, with the line 有美一人 "There is a beautiful person" as a crux of the interpretation. We cannot expect that any of these readings will offer us access to the "original" meaning of the poem (whatever that may have been, and indeed if the poem itself ever had a monologic "meaning"). What is fascinating about these interpretations is not their potential usefulness in understanding the poem, but rather the strategies they use to compensate for the quality of reference inherent in a performance of this poem and absent from the written page.[35] As an indexical phrase, its meaning is highly context-dependent (especially because it is ambiguous as to gender); in performance an audience of cognoscenti might know who was meant (and the identity of that person could be different in different performances), but reading the poem on the page and assuming, as we tend to, a stable referent, we are helpless. The tradition claims that the poem condemns the licentious state of affairs under Duke Ling, and all three of our commentators accept that unproven connection. Each of them, however, makes the connection work using a different indexical reference, and the very diversity of these claims makes each of them doubtful, as does the lack of specific reference to the anecdote in question (even of the questionable variety we found in The Woods of Zhu). Moreover, to preserve the larger claim that the poem comments on the story of Duke Ling and Xia Ji, each interpretation is willing to do considerable violence to the natural interpretation

[34] He Kai 1973 Vol. 6 *juan* 26 p. 12b.

[35] In performance, this poem could have meant many things to many people – light entertainment in some contexts, highly charged innuendo in others. Once transmitted textually, it needs to refer, knowingly, to a specific individual; we not only don't know who the "beautiful person" is, but perhaps for the first time begin to feel that we *must* know.

of the poem: the first interpretation turns a story of louche and decadent bawdry into an anguished *grande passion*, the second transfers the erotic fascination from the lovers to the upright minister who reproves them, and the third envisions a woman openly expressing her shameless erotic desires. Even more than with the preceding poem, this poem seems only tenuously connected with the event that is said to provide its context.

If, however, we dismiss the link to the anecdote as unproven, what would (or could) the poems mean? Whether or not Xia Nan is Xia Zhengshu, and whether or not Zhulin is the site of the Xia family estate, it seems clear that this is a poem making reference to specific people and places. Indexical language (if such it is) must point to *something*, and the poem only makes sense if we think we know who or what Xia Nan and the wilds of Zhu are. If we accept these names as forms of address, that is, as symbolic rather than indexical signs (meaning that their significance is a matter of arbitrary cultural convention), this only deepens our hermeneutic dilemma. To the extent that the names are forms of reference, we can at least imagine the emergence of evidence to resolve the question, but if the names are instead forms of address, then we cannot interpret the poem at all without being inside the cultural moment that created it.

Whatever the case, it seems that *The Woods of Zhu* is transmitting messages on more than one level. Let us retain for the moment one assumption from the commentarial tradition, which is that this is a blame-poem, a poem performed as a critique. This assumption was of course convenient for the tradition, which was always eager to find moments of moral instruction in the *Songs*, but the hint of deception in the text suggests blame as a plausible basis for interpretation. The performance of the poem might then be seen as providing this canonical message of blame at any time. The performance of a poem from the *Songs* includes performer and audience within a community of shared education and values (and, moreover, performs that inclusion, as we shall see in this chapter and the two that follow it).[36] At the same time,

[36] Of course, there is no reason for this to have been a perfect community of equally shared values and equal access to education. Rather, the performance of the poem, to at least some extent, interpellates its audience and performers *as* members of such a community.

the performance of a particular poem may be seen as an indexical sign, arising out of and reflecting the specific political or social situation in which the performance is taking place. The canonical aspect of the poem's meaning must have its origins in an epichoric context, even if we are unable to be specific about that context, whereas the self-referential dimension will be Panhuaxia, in that the poem circulates as part of a shared poetic language, which allows all educated members of the Huaxia world to perform or cite the poem as a form of critique, and indeed makes the ability to do so a measure of the individual's membership in that world.

If *The Woods of Zhu* is indeed a poem of blame or critique, then the self-referential function of its message would be to inform its listeners that the performer was serving the role of critic vis-à-vis someone else (who may or may not be a member of the immediate audience, but who is certainly always at least an implicit or indirect audience). Who is blaming and who is blamed has the capacity to shift with each possible performance. At the same time, the use of proper names within the text of the poems implies at least a notional Ur-performance directed at a specific target. If this notional original performance did imply an original target, then all subsequent performances would be a reenactment of this notional original performance, with the original target acting as a metaphorical substitute for the current target. Although an original context must presumably have existed, the details of its nature may have been unimportant in the Panhuaxia context, in which what mattered was the poem's usefulness as a means of critiquing one's ruler (or anyone else), while simultaneously asserting one's own cultural status as a person proficient in the language of the *Songs*. The work of the poem would be equally effective whether or not the audience recognized the original referent – a new referent in a new context would be just as meaningful as the original.

This fluidity of reference, which may or may not have been enough for the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, was clearly unsuitable by the time of the Han. Once the *Songs* had been canonized and textualized, and reified and packaged along with the other classics for use as instruments of imperial and cosmopolitan ideology, critique of unspecified people for unspecified reasons became unsuitable. In this context, the question of who was being critiqued and why became urgent, and this is why, I believe, the Han-era Mao commentaries see

an emphatic need to emphasize the compositional context of our two poems, whereas the Warring States–era *Zuozhuan* do not. The choice of the episode to which a given poem was linked was not random; there were several structural reasons that our poems were linked to the story of Duke Ling and of Xia Ji (aside from the obvious dramatic and moralistic appeal of the story).

For the Mao commentaries, certain features of the arrangement of the *Canon of Songs* as a whole structure interpretations of specific poems. The first three of the four divisions of the *Canon of Songs* – the *Airs of the States* and the *Minor* and *Major Court Songs* – are thought to include both *zheng* 正 ("aligned, straight, upright, appropriate, orthodox") and *bian* 變 ("askew, transformed, perverted, unorthodox") components, with a general movement from initial *zheng* sections to *bian* poems as the division reaches its end.[37] There is some overlap between the indigenous Chinese categories of *zheng* and *bian* poems and our notion of praise- and blame-poetry, derived from the Greek lyric tradition, for *zheng* poems are generally said to represent praise for worthy rulers, whereas *bian* poems tend to critique present immorality, either directly, or indirectly through praise of past morality.[38] For the *Airs of the States*, the *Songs* of individual states are generally seen as either *zheng* or *bian*, with, for example, those of Zhounan and Zhaonan at the beginning of the *Airs* seen as *zheng*, and those of Wei, Zheng, and Chen as among the most *bian* of the collection (remember that our poem, *The Woods of Zhu*, is from the *Airs of Chen*).

[37] Owen (1992) 47–8 discusses the use of these terms in the Mao preface. He observes that the Preface claims that *bian* poems were written by "the historians of the states" *guoshi* 國史 as a means of critiquing the times in which they lived, although on the surface these poems would appear to represent immoral activity without judgment. Zhu Xi will later recast the solution to this dilemma by arguing that corrupt times produced corrupt poems, but that the morally informed reader will be able to salvage the poems by reading them as critique. Dai Zhen (1724–77; Rprt. (1986) 551–60) provides an excellent overview of the traditional interpretation of the various sections of the *Canon of Songs*, and of which poems were *zheng* and *bian*. In his fairly restrictive terms, the two first sections of the *Airs of the States* (the *Zhounan and Zhaonan*), as well as the first sixteen poems of the *Minor Court Songs* and the first eighteen of the *Major Court Songs*, were the only poems considered *zheng*, whereas the remainder were *bian*.

[38] Gentili (1988) 110 introduces a very similar concept of poetry of indirect blame in the "para-invective," (*parapsogos*), a category he derives from the discussion in the *Phaedrus* of Plato.

This division of the poems into orthodox and deviant on the basis of their content is clearly a comparatively late one, bearing little relationship to how the poems were viewed during most of the Eastern Zhou. Van Zoeren has argued that the earliest layers of the *Analects* suggest that Confucius' own interest in the *Songs* was directed much more toward their musical form than toward their moral content.[39] A passage in the "Record of Music" chapter of the *Records of Rites* suggests that the *Airs of Zheng*, for example, were considered deviant because their orchestration included flutes and strings, and their melodies made use, daringly, of half-tones.[40] Archaeological evidence confirms that musical innovations were taking place; sets of bells uncovered from the remains of the Zeng capital are indeed tuned at semitone intervals.[41] It is unclear whether the gradual disappearance of the music to which the *Songs* were sung led to a transfer of the critique of music to that of content, or whether it was the increasing interest in the moral usefulness of the poems that led to the disappearance of the music; either way, by the time of our commentaries, we find very little awareness of the music, but much preoccupation with the decadence of the *Airs* of certain states. Where Panhuaxia interpretations, in which the *Songs* seem still to have circulated mostly in performance, evaluated them mostly in terms of their musical form, and as individual songs, the cosmopolitan, textualized Han judged them (and used them) for their moral content.

The division into *zheng* and *bian* on the level of the *Airs* as a whole finds a parallel on the level of the *Airs* of the individual states. Here, the general presumption (albeit without explicit support) is that the poems are in rough chronological order, so that the poems of each state may be read as a sort of history of that state in poetic form (or, better, that they may be read as a history of the popular mood and moral climate of the state). Because the early Western Zhou was represented from the Spring and Autumn period onward as an idealized state, and later stages of the dynasty as an era of decline, this tended to inscribe within each collection a narrative of deterioration and deviance.

[39] Van Zoeren (1991) 48.

[40] *Yue ji* p. 665. See DeWoskin (1982) 94 for a discussion of this passage.

[41] See Falkenhausen (1993) 280–307, for a detailed discussion of these bells and the inscriptions on them, which reveal much about musical theory in the state of Zeng. See also Lewis (1999) 155–6; DeWoskin (1982) 92–4.

The combination of these two structural elements of the Mao interpretation of the *Canon of Songs* provides a robust if somewhat arbitrary framework for the interpretation of individual poems. At times a real tension could exist between the interpretation a poem received based on its position within its collection, and an interpretation based on its own semantic content. Although the poems were always interpreted in terms of an imagined epichoric context, this context was by the time of the commentarial tradition structurally imposed from without. In the case of *The Woods of Zhu*, located near the end of one of the *bian*, or deviant, sections of the *Airs of the States*, this framework is an interpretation either of blame for a later ruler of Chen, or of implicit blame through praise of the past. Such is, of course, exactly what we find in the actual interpretative history of *The Woods of Zhu*. As we have seen, it is traditionally considered to be among the most recently composed of the poems in the *Canon of Songs* as a whole, being dated to the years 599–598 BC, and it is seen as a blame-poem, explicitly connected to an unsavory episode in the *Zuozhuan*, an episode that lends itself especially well to a moralizing interpretation.

None of this denies that *The Woods of Zhu* might indeed have been composed as a critique of Duke Ling of Chen and his officials for the depravity of their conduct. It is quite possible that Xia Nan and "the Woods of Zhu" mean what the commentarial tradition claim they do; an original performance must have referred to someone and to somewhere. The evidence allows us neither to confirm nor to deny the traditional interpretation, although it does challenge the techniques used to arrive at that interpretation. Even if the *Canon of Songs* can be connected to the history represented in the *Zuozhuan*, the *Zuozhuan* itself provides us with other possibilities, and it is to one of these possibilities (albeit an atypical one) that we shall now turn. In so doing, we turn back from the cosmopolitan reading strategies of the Mao school, toward the Panhuaxia readings of earlier times and texts.

Citing the *Songs* in the *Zuozhuan*: Typical and Atypical Examples

The *Zuozhuan* frequently quotes from the *Songs*, and it tends to do so in one of a limited number of ways. With very few exceptions, the poems are either cited (either by speakers or by the narrator of the *Zuozhuan*), usually with moralizing overtones, or performed

(almost always as a form of diplomatic negotiation).[42] The question of diplomatic performances of the *Songs* will be the subject of the next chapter; in what follows I examine some of the historical applications to which our two poems were put, and some of the poetic associations with our historical anecdote. In part, my aim is to illustrate the arbitrary connection between signifier and signified. The canonical, address-oriented aspect of the poems is applicable to a wide range of historical situations, and a given historical episode can find expression in a wide range of poems.

Beyond this, I would like to draw attention to a qualitative difference in the ways in which poems and anecdotes are related in the *Zuozhuan* and in the Mao commentaries: in the former, the poems overtly circulate as free-floating signifiers, capable of being attached to any particular historical context, and their defining scenes of authorship tend to take place in performance rather than in composition, whereas in the latter, the poems are understood to have a fixed meaning, and their moment of composition is thought constitutive of their meaning. I have already suggested reasons that this might be so. The combination of the loss of the musical basis of the *Songs*, the increasing tendency to view them as textual phenomena, and the ideological reappropriation of the poems in a cosmopolitan context all combined to direct attention to the composition of the *Songs*, as opposed to their performance. I shall illustrate this difference in more detail, using two examples, both drawn from the *Zuozhuan*, where one seems indicative of the Panhuaxia approach to *Songs* citations, and the other suggests the beginnings of the cosmopolitan reading of the *Songs*.

My first example is from the early years of the Spring and Autumn period, and is in fact the first instance in the *Zuozhuan* in which a named character, rather than the narrator, cites one of the *Songs*. At some unspecified date,[43] the Marquis of Qi had offered his daughter, Wenjiang, in marriage to Hu, the heir apparent of Zheng. Hu politely declined the offer:

[42] For the typology, see Schaberg (2001) 72–80 (on citation) and 234–43 (on performance). For a more exhaustive study of the quotation of *Songs* (including those not in the *Canon of Songs*) in the *Zuozhuan*, see Zeng (1993).

[43] Although presumably before 715, when the *Zuozhuan* tells us that Hu had married a woman from the ruling family of the state of Chen; presumably, the Marquis of Qi does not want to marry his daughter off as a concubine!

Before the Duke of Lu had married Wenjiang, the daughter of the Marquis of Qi, the Marquis had wanted to marry her to Hu, the heir apparent to Zheng. Hu refused. Someone asked his reason. He said, "All men have their matches. Qi is a great state, and not my match. The *Song* says, 'For yourself take much happiness.' I concern myself with my affairs alone; what do I have to do with a great nation?"

公之未昏於齊也，齊侯欲以文姜妻鄭大子忽，大子忽辭，人問其故，大子曰，人各有耦，齊大，非吾耦也，詩云，自求多福，在我而已，大國何為，(*Zuozhuan*, Duke Huan 6, [706 BC] p. 112)

The poem from which he quotes is the first of the *Major Court Odes*, titled *King Wen* (*Song* 235), and he quotes one line of the sixth stanza of this seven-stanza poem:

Do you remember your ancestors! Tend their virtue!
May you long match the Will of Heaven, and for yourself take much happiness.
Before Yin [the Shang dynasty] lost its armies, it was mightily matched to its Supreme God.[44]
Use Yin as a mirror; the Will of Heaven is hard to keep.

無念爾祖，聿脩厥德，永言配命，自求多福，
殷之未喪師，克配上帝，宜鑒于殷，駿命不易，

The poem as a whole clearly praises King Wen, the culture-hero and founder of the Zhou dynasty; it was conventionally thought to have been composed by the Duke of Zhou as regent, in order to guide his charge, King Cheng. As such, it is one of the core elements of the charter myth of the foundation of the Zhou. Our citation seems to ignore this context almost completely; Hu seems to use the solemn language of ancestor worship as a humble way to establish his own unworthiness to marry someone so exalted as the daughter of the Marquis of Qi. To make sense of the citation, we must take the line he quotes in the context of the preceding line, where the word I have translated "match" (配) is the same as the "match" of Hu's speech. A punning connection between "matching" as adhering to the Will of Heaven, and "matching" as finding the right spouse is the key to the surface meaning of Hu's citation of the *Songs*. To marry into the Qi house, Hu suggests, would be to countermand Heaven's will. Hu, then, is taking a poem of high Panhuaxia solemnity and citing it in

44 *Shangdi*, my "Supreme God," was the most important deity in Shang dynasty cosmology; Heaven the most important in Zhou cosmology. See, e.g., Puett (2002) 54–60.

his own historical and political context, demonstrating in the process the suitability of the *Songs* as a sort of universal language, albeit one in which the signifiers signify different things at different times.

The tension between the highly serious poem and its slightly irreverent use is no accident; note that the *Zuozhuan*'s narrator tersely observes that "an educated man would say, 'He was good at planning for himself' " (君子曰: 善自為謀). The placement of the anecdote in fact displays a profound sense of narrative irony: the story is not told under the year in which it took place (indeed, the date of the event is suppressed), but rather immediately following a battle-scene several years later, in 706:

> The Northern Rong[45] invaded Qi, and Qi sent to seek aid from Zheng. The Heir Apparent of Zheng, Hu, commanded the forces that came to the aid of Qi. In the sixth month, they massively defeated the Rong forces, and he captured their two leaders, Big Good Guy and Little Good Guy,[46] and three hundred soldiers in leather armor, all of whom he presented to the ruler of Qi. At this time, the high officials of the several lords were garrisoning Qi's capital. The people of Qi presented them with cattle, and caused the Lu forces to make the distribution, with Zheng last.[47] Hu of Zheng, because the victory had been his, was furious, and on this account the Battle of Lang took place.[48]
>
> 北戎伐齊，齊使乞師于鄭，鄭大子忽帥師救齊，六月，大敗戎師，獲其二帥，大良，少良，甲首三百，以獻於齊，於是諸侯之大夫戍齊，齊人饋之餼，使魯為其班，後鄭，鄭忽以其有功也，怒，故有郎之師，(*Zuozhuan*, Duke Huan 6, [706 BC] p. 112)

In other words, our narrative takes pains to remind us of Hu's irascibility and of his finely tuned sense of self-worth, rendering its subsequent quotation of Hu's apparently humble rejection of Wenjiang of Qi still more suspect. After Hu's victory over the Northern Rong, the Marquis of Qi offers him another of his daughters, an offer Hu somewhat haughtily refuses. Another important dimension of the story is that, whereas Lu may have, for ritual reasons, acted as if Zheng

45 A fairly generic term for the non-Huaxia people to the north of the Huaxia heartland, on the steppes of what is now Mongolia. They had been seen as Zhou allies in the founding of the dynasty, but by the Spring and Autumn period they were beginning to be represented as the "Other" of Huaxia culture.

46 The names may be simply transliterations of Rong names, in which case read Daliang and Shaoliang; however, the parallelism suggests otherwise.

47 A reference in the narrative of the Battle of Lang (see below) suggests that Lu distributed the cattle to Zheng last based on the Zhou order of precedence.

48 In 702 BC, Qi, Wei, and Zheng attacked Lu. We hear nothing of the course or outcome of this battle, merely of Lu's claims in its defense.

were a minor state, Hu's father, Duke Zhuang of Zheng, was the most powerful ruler of the time, a "mini-hegemon"[49] who had defeated the Zhou royal army in battle the year previously, once and for all establishing that Zhou was nothing more than a minor statelet with historical and cultic pretensions.

Remembering that the stanza from *King Wen* from which Hu quotes a line contains a specific warning to King Wen's descendants to view the Shang dynasty's defeat at Wen's hands as a mirror for their own possible defeat, we are able to see in the *Zuozhuan* narrative a subtle but acerbic reminder of how the mighty have fallen, an *ainos* of indirect blame. Taken in isolation, Hu's words may have seemed merely an appropriation of canonical Panhuaxia rhetoric for a self-referential and epichoric purpose; in context, we can see that Hu's epichoric purpose has far-reaching Panhuaxia implications, undermining the present status of the Zhou court and its order of precedence in favor of contemporary and epichoric *Realpolitik*. That it is primarily the *Zuozhuan* narrator, and not Hu himself, who makes this lesson apparent suggests a coloring of despair rather than of triumph, but does not change the fundamental message.[50]

My second example, more typical of the cosmopolitan readings we find in the Mao commentaries than of the Panhuaxia approach of the main *Zuozhuan* narrative,[51] is one we have already encountered. In our discussion of *The Woods of Zhu*, we have already seen Confucius himself cited as citing the *Songs* with respect to the story of Duke Ling and Xia Ji:

> Confucius said, "Where the *Canon of Songs* says, 'The people have much depravity, do not establish your own depravity,'[52] this would refer to Xie Ye."
>
> 孔子曰, 詩云, 民之多辟, 無自立辟, 其洩冶之謂乎。(*Zuozhuan*, Duke Xuan, Year 9 [599 BC] p. 380)

[49] Pines (2002) 321.

[50] This general coloring is broadly consistent with Brooks' third compositional layer of the *Zuozhuan*, which she identifies as the last layer to have a strong ethical concern, generally skeptical of war and expecting hegemonic regional leaders to treat minor states with restraint (Brooks (2003/04) 83).

[51] Brooks (2003/04) 74 argues that these "Confucius says" passages in the *Zuozhuan* date from the later layers of the text, and notes that as such they tend to emphasize practicality over ethics. This passage will, then, constitute something of an exception, or a contradiction, to that rule.

[52] Yang (1981) 702 suggests that the second 辟 "depravity," in this passage may instead refer to a law code.

The stakes are high in this citation; Confucius is relatively rarely given a speaking role in the *Zuozhuan*, and the events of our anecdote took place just fifty years before Confucius' birth.[53] In condemning the actions of Duke Ling of Chen and in expressing approval of Xie Ye's own critique, the voice attributed to Confucius quotes from the *Major Court Songs* section of the *Canon of Songs*. The quotation is taken from the poem *Backward* (板, *Song* 254; p. 632), whose title is drawn from its first line, "The *di* on high (a supreme spiritual power) is acting backward" 上帝板板. The poem as a whole is composed in the voice of one who is critiquing the impropriety of the order of the day and seeking to advise his ruler on behavior appropriate to his position. The stanza from which our quote is taken, the sixth, reads as follows:

> Heaven's enlightening the people (lit. "opening their window"),
> Is like the *xun* (ocarina) and the *chi* (bamboo flute) [in harmony],
> Like the *zhang* jade tablet and the *gui* jade tablet,
> Like grasping something and [being able to] take it away,
> Taking it away with no more effort.
> Enlightening the people is truly simple,
> The people have many depravities,
> Do not establish your own depravities.
>
> 天之牖民・如壎如篪・如璋如圭・如取如攜・
> 攜無曰益・牖民孔易・民之多辟・無自立辟・

Closer examination of this stanza helps us to understand the use of the *Songs* for social critique. First of all, we should recognize that the historical context claimed for *Backward* in our commentaries, namely the reign of King Li (周厲王, 877–841 BC), has no bearing on this passage;[54] the Confucius represented in this passage is interested in the poem for its ethical content, not its historical situation. The argument of the stanza begins from the premise that beneficence and moral instruction, operating from above on the people below, are processes of harmonization. The ocarina and bamboo flute become

[53] The *Spring and Autumn Annals* are the court annals from the state of Lu for the years 721–479; later tradition will have it that Confucius edited the *Annals* himself, although it is unlikely that that view was yet prevalent at the fourth-century BC date of compilation of the *Zuozhuan* (Nylan (2001) 6).

[54] It will not surprise the reader to learn that there is nothing in the text of *Backward* to suggest any specific historical context; once again the Mao school dates a poem based on its sequence within the *Songs*.

figures for the harmonious blending of instrumental voices, but the convention assumes the ocarina as the instrument that establishes the melody, whereas the bamboo flute has the function of supporting that melodic line.[55] The notion of harmony, then, is clearly bound up with a sense that the harmony is not a collaborative project, but rather a question of the less powerful behaving in accord with the influence of the more powerful. A related image is found with the *gui* and *zhang* jade tablets. Both of these are ritual objects; the *gui* has a square base but is round on top, whereas the *zhang* is simply half of a *gui*.[56] Here the hierarchical element is suppressed, but it is clear that the *gui* cannot come into being without there first being two *zhang*.

These two metaphors for the harmonious use of the proper instruments lead to the third metaphor, in which success in influencing the people is described in quasi-narcissistic terms as being as simple as reaching for something and obtaining it. If the ocarina is performing the right note, then the bamboo flute player will know what to do. If the *zhang* tablets are ready, then so is the *gui*. Actions have their intended consequences, and so achieving success can become simply a matter of reaching out one's hand. In like manner, it is argued, if the people are to learn proper behavior, it is first necessary for those in command over them to behave properly themselves. If the leaders are without depravity, the people will naturally follow their example. If, on the other hand, the rulers exhibit their own depravity (as Duke Ling of Chen and his ministers assuredly did), then the people will not know what to imitate and their own behavior will be depraved.

Although the attribution to Confucius must necessarily be without proof, the argument offered is in fact entirely Ruist in its import, emphasizing the transformative powers of both music and moral behavior when either (or preferably both) are displayed before the people by the ruler and his officials. Strikingly, this citation of *Backward* seems to take account of the poem as a whole, something that is not always true in the *Zuozhuan*, where poems are frequently cited against themselves. A consequence of this is that it is possible either to

[55] See *Song* 199; p. 425, *He ren si*, 何人斯, the seventh stanza of which begins 伯氏吹壎, 仲氏吹篪. "The elder brother plays the ocarina, the younger brother plays the bamboo flute."

[56] See the *Da Zongbo* 大宗伯 chapter of the *Offices of Zhou* (pp. 270–85) for an account of the presumed function of these ritual instruments.

see the poem as a comment on the situation or to see the situation as a gloss on the poem. The presentation of the anecdote as we have it suggests the former approach. The *Zuozhuan* presents us with a historical episode in the life of Duke Ling of Chen, one that reflects badly on his fitness for rule from a Ruist perspective, and that also is the direct cause of his own death. The comment, purporting to come from Confucius himself, underscores and amplifies the critique of Duke Ling already offered within the anecdote itself by Xie Ye, and seeks to justify Xia Zhengshu's own assassination of Duke Ling the following year.

At the same time, the connection between poem and anecdote is not altogether obvious, and the moralizing interpretation of the event assumes a particular interpretation of the poem itself. The perspective taken by "Confucius" in condemning Duke Ling presumes a series of assumptions about the meaning and function of poetry in society, but it also serves as a justification of those assumptions. We are being told not only that the poem shows us the wickedness of Duke Ling's ways, but also that the wickedness of Duke Ling shows us the value and significance of the poem. What seems like an exercise in historical analysis turns out to be in addition an exercise in reading and interpretation. The *Canon of Songs* glosses and reinforces Xie Ye's condemnation of the Duke, but this statement can also be read to imply that Xie Ye's condemnation reinforces the generalized interpretation offered by the *Canon of Songs* poem, validating its applicability to the political realm.

To return to the quotation from Aristotle discussed earlier in the chapter, the reader of the *Zuozhuan*, on encountering the quotation from *Backward*, is able, with Aristotle's viewer of paintings, to say, "So this is that!" That is, he or she is able to see in the poem a representation of (and a gloss on, and a justification of) Xie Ye's remonstration with Duke Ling. At the same time, however, he or she is also able to reverse Aristotle's move, and see in Xie Ye's remonstration a representation of the critique made by the composer of *Backward*, and an affirmation of a particular reading of that poem. In this episode in the *Zuozhuan*, then, we have an Aristotelian double pleasure – not only do we see that this is that, but we also get to see that that is this! This double pleasure is, needless to say, a double victory for the

hermeneutic system of the emergent commentarial tradition, which is moving toward presenting all of the classics as a fairly homogeneous model for elite behavior. Regardless of whether this passage is older or newer than the previous one, the mode of reading it embodies certainly points toward the Ruist readings that will predominate in the Han.[57]

Conclusions

We began with Xia Ji's narrative and its application to *The Woods of Zhu* and *The Pond Shore*, where we saw that if we read the names within *The Woods of Zhu* indexically (and with an eye favorable to the commentaries) we can equate names in the poem with people in the *Zuozhuan*. Less persuasively, the structural possibilities inherent in reading the *Songs* (and dependent on an ordering of the collection likely dating from the fourth century BC) push us toward the conventional reading of *The Woods of Zhu*, and proximity invites a similar reading of *The Pond Shore*, even though that poem is much more difficult to tie to Xia Ji. If both poems must refer to the same historical incident in the state of Chen, then the story of Duke Ling and Xia Ji seems a probable candidate.

As we saw with Hu of Zheng's citation of *King Wen*, however, the language of the *Songs* can function symbolically rather than indexically, and tends to move in the direction of *ainos* rather than that of explicit parallels. Even the *Zuozhuan*'s Confucius, quoting *Backward* in our second example of citation, is still citing the poem's language in a more ainetic way than the Mao commentaries, using the *Songs* in conjunction with history to offer a totalizing moral perspective on human (or at least elite Huaxia male) behavior. The commentaries may have the same goal, but they pursue that goal on an indexical model of one-to-one correspondence between poem and event, where the *Zuozhuan*'s Confucius uses a symbolic model of one-to-many, many-to-one correspondence.

[57] We have already seen Brooks' (2003/04) position on this issue; for the view that the passages of the *Zuozhuan* in which Confucius speaks are likely to be late, see Lewis (1999) 132–3. For the opposite point of view, see Pines (2002) 23.

I have tentatively suggested a chronological movement, with the Hu of Zheng episode representing a slightly earlier layer of composition in the *Zuozhuan* than the episode in which Confucius comments on Xia Ji and Duke Ling, whereas the commentarial interpretations of *The Woods of Zhu* and *The Pond Shore* mark a much later stage. If I am correct here, then a number of shifts seem to map onto this chronology: the movement from recognizing, even playfully, the self-referential meaning of a poem to insisting on (finding) its canonical meaning, the movement away from epichoric and ainetic interpretations toward Panhuaxia/cosmopolitan moralizing, away from symbolic readings of language and toward indexicalization, away from rhetoric and toward morality, and away from performance and toward text and commentary. Indeed, the readings of the Mao commentaries, with their textual scenes of authorship, are in some senses equivalents of or substitutes for performance, doing the same work of determining where the poem is pointing, but once and for all, rather than contingently, as would be the case in performance.

Where this chapter has sought to identify a historical transition within a synchronic system of interpretations, the next will concentrate on the notionally earliest of these interpretive strategies, in which the meaning of the *Songs* was symbolic, epichoric, ainetic, and performance context–dependent. In place of this chapter's focus on contrasts between commentary on the *Songs* and their citations in the *Zuozhuan*, I turn in the next chapter to that other great category of *Songs* quotations in the *Zuozhuan*: performance in diplomatic negotiations. Of course, our access to these alleged performances is through text alone, and the tension inherent in textual transcription of oral performance will be crucial to my argument.

Excursus: The States in the *Airs of the States*

The *Airs of the States* are a collection of poems represented as coming from the various regional states of the Zhou, and organized according to those states. In other words, it is a collection that represents itself as being Panhuaxia through its notionally complete survey of the epichoric song traditions of the Huaxia cultural world of the Zhou. That said, the states represented correspond to no one historical period, and the representation of the Huaxia world they offer is oddly skewed.

A brief summary of the divisions of the *Airs of the States* reveals some of the difficulties:

State	Notes
周南 Zhounan[58]	Understood, with the Shaonan below, as one of two divisions into which King Wen arranged the Zhou heartlands, awarding it to his son Dan 旦, who became the Duke of Zhou. After the Duke of Zhou succeeded in the final conquest of the Shang, he was awarded the state of Lu 魯, in modern Shandong.
召南 Shaonan	Understood, with the Zhaonan above, as one of two divisions into which King Wen arranged the Zhou heartlands, awarding it to his ally Ji Shi 姬奭, who became the Duke of Shao. After the final conquest of the Shang, he was awarded the state of Yan 燕, near modern Beijing.[59]
邶 Bei	Understood as an ancient division of Wei; see below. Virtually unknown in our sources, whether textual or archaeological.
鄘 Yong	As with Bei, above.
衛 Wei	A state granted to Kangshu Feng 康叔封, younger brother of King Wu, in the vicinity of the former Shang capital Anyang.[60]
王 Wang	The Royal Domains, traditionally here understood as referring, not to the Western Zhou capitals, but to the Eastern Zhou capital at Luoyang, and thus from the Spring and Autumn period.
鄭 Zheng	Traditionally understood as a state established just west of Luoyang in 806 BC for a younger son of King Li. Recent archaeological work has suggested both that another lineage named Zheng had earlier occupied that site, and that the lineage that moved there in 806 had previously been located at the western end of the Wei valley, to the west of the Western Zhou capitals.[61]
齊 Qi	A territory in modern Shandong traditionally awarded to Jiang Shangfu 姜尚父, an ally of King Wu and a member of a clan with marriage ties to the Zhou house.

[58] The *nan* of this "state" and that following literally means "south." Whether it is to be interpreted as such here, or whether *nan* here referred to a musical genre, possibly distinct from *feng*, or *Airs*, was already a subject of controversy in ancient times.

[59] See Li (2006) 336–7 for recent archaeological discoveries that confirm the establishment of the Zhou state of Yan at roughly the time suggested by the historical sources.

[60] For archaeological evidence for the founding of Wei, see Li (2006) 67.

[61] See Li (2006) 246–250.

State	Notes
魏 Weì	A state supposedly established in the Fen valley for a member of the Ji clan (the Zhou house); history records it only as having been absorbed by Qin in 660 BC.
唐 Tang	Assigned to Jin; the name Tang refers to the state allegedly controlled by descendants of Yao.
秦 Qin	A state originally established (we are told) around 870 as a buffer state against the Rong in the far west of the Wei valley, Qin shifted east to take over the former Zhou heartlands after the Zhou themselves moved west in 770.
陳 Chen	A state traditionally established by King Wu for a descendant of Shun (allegedly working as a potter at Wu's court) in eastern Henan.
鄶 Kuai	An obscure state in Henan, allegedly held by the lineage of a minister of Zhuanxu, a sage-ruler of remote antiquity; possibly associated with Zheng.
曹 Cao	A state in the west of Shandong, granted to a younger brother of King Wu. It fell to Song in 487 BC.
豳 Bin	A region in the Jing valley, northwest of the Western Zhou capitals. It had been the Zhou homeland during part of the predynastic period.

It should be clear that this selection of states represented in the *Airs* does not reflect the synchronic network of states operative at any particular point. By tradition, the *Airs of Qin* were understood to reflect that state's position in the final years of the Western Zhou and in the early Spring and Autumn period, a dating also compatible with the association of the *Airs of the Royal Domain* (Wang) with the Eastern Zhou capital and the *Airs of Zheng* with that state as established in 806. Bin, however, is a polity always associated with the predynastic stage of the Zhou, whereas the *Airs* of Zhounan, Shaonan, Bei, Yong, and Tang all seem to reflect if anything the political terminology of the early Western Zhou. There is thus no century, much less year, within which all the states represented in the *Airs of the States* might have coexisted.

There are also strikingly wide disparities in power and significance among the states. The *Zuozhuan* tells us of twenty-six states established by Kings Wen and Wu and by the Duke of Zhou; of these, only three

(Weì, Cao and Jin) are directly represented in the *Airs of the States* (*Zuozhuan* Xi 24; p. 47). Of a fairly standard list of the fifteen major states of the Spring and Autumn era, ostensibly the time of composition of most of the *Songs*,[62] only seven (Qi, Jin, Qin, Cao, Zheng, Chen, Wei) are represented in the *Airs*. To be sure, there are reasons that some of the remaining eight are excluded. Three (Chu 楚, Wu 吳, and Yue 越) are on the southern borders of the ethnically Huaxia world and are incompletely incorporated into that world until the sixth century BC, after the presumed closing of the canon of the *Songs*.[63] Lu and Yan, although not represented directly, are represented through genealogical metonymy: Lu through its connections to the Duke of Zhou (and thus to the *Airs of Zhounan*), and Yan through its associations with the Duke of Shao (and thus to the *Airs of Shaonan*). Lu is additionally represented in the *Songs* as a whole by the presence of the *Lu Hymns* in the *Hymns* section. The state of Song 宋, assigned to the descendants of the Shang to allow them to carry out ancestral sacrifices, is not represented in the *Airs*, but is represented by the *Shang Hymns* in the *Hymns* section. The reasons for the exclusion of Cai 蔡 and Xu 許 are more obscure.

From a geographic perspective, we find that the states represented do at least provide a fairly broad degree of coverage of the two capital regions and of points east and west along the major river valleys. Four of the states (Wei, Tang, Qin, and Bin) can be associated with the areas to the west of the old Western Zhou capitals near modern Xi'an. Two (Zhounan and Shaonan) relate to the area around the Western Zhou capitals, although in both cases there is a strong connection to areas much farther to the east; to the extent that the *Airs of Qin* reflect the Spring and Autumn period, they, too, can be connected to the Western Zhou capital regions. No fewer than five (Bei, Yong, Wei, the Royal Domains, and Zheng) relate to the general area around Luoyang. Finally, four relate to areas east of Luoyang: Chen and Kuai to modern Henan, and Qi and Cao to modern Shandong. Viewed within the sequence of our text, the move is broadly from core to periphery,

[62] Hsu (1999) 547.

[63] For a discussion of the cultural integration of these states into the Huaxia sphere, see Falkenhausen (2006) 262–83. The state of Chu will, in due course, be connected to its own poetic anthology, the *Songs of the South* 楚辭, dating from roughly the fourth century BC forward.

with the Western Zhou capital region first, then the Luoyang region, then a move east to Qi, then west to the Qin and those associated with it, then the relatively minor states of Chen, Kuai, and Cao. The collection concludes with Bin, a move that brings us to the far west geographically but temporally back to origins.

The collection's movement is thus both geographic and chronological, as David Schaberg has noticed.[64] Within the geographic structure of representing the music of different regional polities, we find encoded a narrative of the rise and fall of the Zhou dynasty, with those states associated with the predynastic and early Western Zhou understood as embodying the virtues of idealized rule, and those associated with later times representing decadence and decline.

[64] Schaberg (2001) 89.

6

Summit at Fei

The Poetics of Diplomacy in the Zuozhuan

The Scene of Diplomatic Authorship: Ritual and Historical Backgrounds

As I have suggested in the previous chapter, the Chinese classics can best be understood as an attempt to create a totalizing system of human (especially elite male) behavior and speech, creating a universal system of ritual and discourse that both facilitates interaction among peer polities of the Huaxia world and marks as outsiders those who do not know the correct practices. The classics seem mostly to have begun as performance practices, as an elite system of education more or less analogous to that of the symposium in archaic Greece. As Michael Nylan has suggested, the gradual textualization and canonization of the classics may have democratized their influence; once available in textual form, the ritual and linguistic practices encoded by the classics became accessible to all who were literate.[1] In the same way, the textualization of ritual may have eased the admission of new states in the south into the Huaxia sphere.[2]

Dating is, predictably, a problem. The texts we know as the classics are highly "sedimented;"[3] that is, they accreted and took textual form

[1] Nylan (2001) 181.

[2] See, for example, Falkenhausen (2006) 262–83.

[3] Nylan (2001) 258. Cf. the characterization of the *Zuozhuan* as "accretional" in Brooks (2003/04) 51, an attempt to differentiate and date layers of such a text.

over a long period of time, and the ritual texts in particular did not take their final form until well into the Han. Although the classics purport to represent an idealized past located in the early Western Zhou, the texts we have seem to have undergone at least two distinct stages of revisionist thinking: an initial stage, beginning in the late Spring and Autumn period and continuing through the Warring States, in which an emergent Panhuaxia self-awareness constructed its idealized origin in the Western Zhou, and a later stage, which begins perhaps in the fourth century BC but reaches full fruit in the Eastern Han, in which this self-awareness is reified, textualized, and repackaged for use as a cosmopolitan imperial ideology.

The goals of the Panhuaxia synthesis and of the cosmopolitan synthesis were in many ways opposite. The Panhuaxia moment, politically fragmented and unstable, sought at most to construct a common language and behavioral system to ease interstate communication and to foster a sense of identity against the non-Huaxia Other, even as new (especially southern) states were incorporated into the Panhuaxia world.[4] The cosmopolitan moment, by contrast, did not conceive of interstate relations at all (because by definition empire, real or imagined, is universal), and sought instead to find in the classics' own idealized vision of the Western Zhou a model of the centralized state that could be adapted to its own needs.

Actual diplomatic missions of the Spring and Autumn periods seem to have faced a real and increasing sense of *Realpolitik*, an awareness that imagined ritual ties could do very little to hold a world of competing military powers together, especially when several of those powers, such as the southern states of Chu and Wu, owed not even token allegiance to the Zhou court. Michael Nylan in particular has detected in the narrative of the *Zuozhuan* an increasing sense of the failure of (ritual) language to refer to external realities and a degeneration even of ideological claims from an adherence to ritual virtues to a completely cynical state-system based solely on naked self-interest.[5] Such a world, obviously, may make use of the conventions of ritual language, but is always aware of the limitations of that language.

[4] Wang (1999).

[5] Nylan (2001) 276–7. Similar thinking underlies the layering of the *Zuozhuan* understood by Brooks (2003/04) 82–7 and Pines (2002) 2–5, even though they differ in the details of the dating schemes they construct.

The cosmopolitan and imperial age of the Han had, naturally, a complex relationship to the Machiavellian history it found represented in the *Zuozhuan*. Its canonical associations with Confucius (and those of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* underlying it) ensured its importance, but its content was rather harder to digest. Too great a focus on the failure of the ritual system in the Spring and Autumn era would call into question its efficacy as a model, but at the same time too positive a view of the era might challenge the necessity (and therefore legitimacy) of the Han state. This may account for the focus on forms of behavior, rather than content (a reason that the ritual practices imagined for the Zhou took textual form only in the Han). What the cosmopolitan reading salvaged from the classics was not so much the rather grubby and violent political world they represented, but rather the pleasing notion that that politics was conducted through ritualized behavior and language, conditioned by the classics.

Certainly, the ritual classics, especially the *Ceremonials*,[6] provide highly detailed accounts of all stages of a diplomatic mission, from the initial appointment of an ambassador through his journey to his mission (including a dress rehearsal of the rituals before crossing the border into his host state) to the rituals, gifts, and feasts to be offered by both sides. Space does not permit a full discussion of these rituals (which may or may not in any event reflect the actual practice of the period). I offer only one paragraph, taken largely at random, from the *Ceremonials*' description of some of the return gifts offered by the hosting ruler, to illustrate the complexity and detail envisioned by that text:

Six wooden holders are laid in the west side room under the west wall, and graded from the north. On the west of the first line are the brined chives, and to the east the stewed meat hash. These are followed by six round serving-bowls

[6] There are three ritual classics. The *Offices of Zhou* 周禮 describes an idealized bureaucracy for the early Western Zhou, with a fantastically elaborate structure of six ministries governing 360 major officials (one for each day of the lunar year), ruling in turn over officials who number in the hundreds of thousands. The *Ceremonials* 儀禮 describes in great detail the behavior appropriate to the lower order of gentry-officials (*shi* 士), from initiation into adulthood and marriage to diplomatic negotiations, archery contests, and official banquets. The *Record of Rites* 禮記 is a somewhat disparate series of essays and anecdotes concerning the content and meaning of ritual behavior attributed to the Xia, Shang, and Zhou dynasties. On the history of these texts, see now Nylan (2009) and Puett (2009).

with white millet in the east and foxtail millet in the west. Then come the four cauldrons of broth, with beef, then lamb on the south, then pork, and beef again on the north. Then there are two square serving-bowls, with sorghum in the west one.... (translation adapted from Steele (1917), 212–13)

西夾六豆・設于西墉下北上・韭菹其東醓醢屈・六簋繼之・黍其東稷錯・四鉶繼之・牛以南羊・羊東豕・豕以北牛・兩簋繼之・粱在西... (儀禮, 聘禮 p. 239)

For all the exhaustive detail lavished on ritual behavior in the *Ceremonials*, the text is all but silent on the question of what language is to be used:

There is no consistent form to the speeches. They should be agreeable and persuasive. If the speeches are long, then they sound labored; if short, they don't make their point. The full extent of the skill of a speech is that it makes its point.

辭無常・孫而說・辭多則史・少則不達・辭苟足以達・義之至也 (儀禮, 聘禮 pp. 284–5)

How, then, is an ambassador to know what to say? His every move has been carefully outlined by the *Ceremonials*, his every gift been chosen for him. Only the actual content of his negotiations is left to him. As the orthodox commentary on this passage says, "The ambassador receives his orders, but does not receive his speeches" (大夫使受命不受辭; p. 285). As the *Zuozhuan* represents matters, the classics do in fact provide the diplomat of the Spring and Autumn period with perfect models of correct speech, in the *Documents* and the *Songs*.[7] Out of such episodes, then, we can see the emergence of a completely stylized pattern of behavior: the *Rites* provide the correct actions, the *Songs* and *Documents* provide the words, and the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and the *Zuozhuan* alternately record the success of the whole system and offer exempla from past eras. These diplomatic episodes, moreover, serve as a particular kind of scene of authorship, where not only is our understanding of the history of the *Zuozhuan* enhanced by the use of the *Songs*, but also our understanding of the *Songs* is enriched by their use in a new context, a context that may be at least as important as any scene of compositional authorship attached to the poem. In particular, because the *Zuozhuan* predates the commentarial traditions on

[7] Whether actual diplomatic negotiations ever took this form is not a question I concern myself with. My interest in these scenes lies principally in their status as scenes of authorship, providing a contextualization and justification for the *Songs* they incorporate.

the *Songs*, the scenes of diplomatic authorship related therein represent the earliest (in my schematization, Panhuaxia) attempt to contextualize and give (at least one) meaning to the *Songs*.

That the actual diplomacy of the Spring and Autumn eras was incompletely characterized by the classics should come as no surprise. The politics of the period is as intricate as it is brutal, and, as I have already suggested, by at least the late seventh century it was clear to all that might was right (or at least got to act that way).[8] After the collapse of the Western Zhou in the 770s, it was no longer possible to claim or imagine (if it ever had been) that the Zhou royal court held absolute power over the Huaxia world. For most of the rest of the eighth century, however, the Zhou court was, if not *primus inter pares* among the Huaxia states, at least *inter pares*. Zhou remained a significant player in interstate affairs until 707 BC, when Duke Zhuang of Zheng (whose son, Hu, we encountered in the previous chapter) decisively defeated the Zhou army. Duke Zhuang himself was reluctant to challenge Zhou's supremacy, even officially apologizing for having wounded the Zhou king in battle, but by demonstrating Zhou's military irrelevance, he had effectively removed the last check on interstate relations. The Huaxia world was in a state of almost constant warfare from this point onward, until the establishment of the Qin empire 450 years later.[9]

The major restraint acting upon interstate conflict in this era was the institution of the *ba* 霸, or hegemon, a regional ruler whose overall military might was sufficient to keep the other states in order. Such rulers might temporarily keep the peace, but none of them succeeded in making their power last for long. Duke Huan of Qi (r. 685–643) was the first and most successful of these hegemons, although by the end of his reign his power had decidedly weakened. After 643, a struggle emerged between two powerful states, a struggle that lies behind our particular diplomatic anecdote. In the north of modern China (broadly, the valley of the Yellow River and its tributaries), the state of Jin, under Duke Wen (636–628), attempted to succeed to the hegemonic power held earlier by Qi, while in the Yangtze valley to the south, the state of Chu emerged as a rival center of power, quickly

[8] See, for example, Nylan (2001) 276–7 and Pines (2002) 4.

[9] Hui (2005) 242–8 has a helpful and extensive list of the major wars of the years 656–221 BC.

absorbing a large number of minor states. Cultural ideology played a role in this conflict: Jin remained (in theory) loyal to the Zhou king and was ethnically Huaxia, whereas Chu was outside the Huaxia world and beyond even the theoretical limits of the Zhou polity. The struggle between Jin and Chu continued for the better part of a century, till a lasting peace was reached in the 540s and the epicenter of conflict moved elsewhere.

This century-long conflict between Jin and Chu had major implications for all of the smaller states. Most of those in geographic proximity to Chu had no choice but to side with their more powerful neighbor, whereas most of the states of the north tended to side with Jin. The state of Zheng was a particular site of contention, having switched sides more than a dozen times during this period,[10] although changes of alliance were common for other states as well. In general, the smaller states were torn between the pursuit of what they saw to be their own interests, a prudent desire not to offend the nearest major state, and an opportunistic tendency to join forces with whichever side seemed the strongest at the moment. Yet another complication lay in the factionalist conflicts with which most regional courts were riven. Most had internecine struggles within the ducal family, and many were also plagued by powerful noble lineages (often as ancient as the ducal lineage itself), and by families of hereditary officeholders. As one would expect, factional conflict within a state could easily shift that state's foreign policy.

Such is the general historical and ritual context in which our diplomatic anecdote took place, in the thirteenth year of the reign of Duke Wen of Lu (613 BC). The occasion was a summit between Zheng and Lu, at which Zheng hoped to persuade Lu to accept peace with Jin. Zheng was particularly eager to achieve such a peace, because they were themselves secretly planning on defecting from supporting Jin to supporting Chu, and wanted Lu to support Jin in order to placate Jin and prevent it from attacking them. The goals of each state were thus complex, and not entirely transparent to the other side.[11] According to the *Zuozhuan*, part of this summit meeting was a state banquet, at

[10] Walker (1953) 50.

[11] Our account of this episode is inevitably slanted toward Lu, the source of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*; the tradition of the classics is made cosmopolitan in part through the elevation of the status of Lu.

which Zijia 子家 and Ji Wenzi 季文子, senior officials from Zheng and Lu respectively, sang portions of the *Canon of Songs*. Both men are important figures in their own right. We encountered Zijia in the previous chapter, as the man who would (six years later) kill his ruler and relative, Duke Ling, over a dispute that began with turtle soup. Ji Wenzi, seen as a paragon of virtue and a seduluous minister, would himself effectively take over rule of Lu from 601 till his death in 568.[12] His descendants would continue in power in Lu for several generations, marginalizing the Dukes of Lu as effectively as the regional rulers had themselves marginalized the King of Zhou a century earlier.

We are now ready to turn to our diplomatic anecdote:

The Earl of Zheng met with the Duke of Lu at Fei, and he also[13] asked for peace with Jin. The Duke accomplished this for both of them. The Earl of Zheng feasted with the Duke of Lu at Fei. Zijia (of Zheng) performed *The Wild Geese*, and Ji Wenzi (of Lu) said, "My humble lord does not altogether lack this quality." Wenzi then performed *The Fourth Month*, and Zijia performed the fourth stanza of *Galloping*. Wenzi performed the fourth stanza of *Gathering the Thornfern*. The Earl of Zheng bowed, and the Duke of Lu bowed in reply.

鄭伯會公于棐, 亦請平于晉, 公皆成之 · 鄭伯于公宴于棐 · 子家賦鴻雁, 季文子曰, 寡君未免於此, 文子賦四月, 子家賦載馳之四章, 文子賦采薇之四章, 鄭伯拜, 公答拜 · (Wen 13 [613 BC] pp. 332–3)

Although this passage simply narrates the fact of performance, with little commentary and no explicit statement of the result, the clear implication is that both states and their leaders here participate in a shared community of understanding. When Zijia sings *The Wild Geese*, Wenzi is able to read this as a message of praise for his ruler, and Zijia's silence would seem to imply that he accepts this interpretation. Moreover, the interchange of song for song seems to imply some sort of matching or exchange, a carrying on of a diplomatic dialogue by means of *Canon of Songs* recitation. The bows exchanged by the rulers at the end of the banquet performances would seem to suggest a satisfactory resolution of the conversation. As the anecdote is presented to us, it seems to model perfectly the linguistic and cultural competence that constitutes Huaxia identity in this period. Episodes such as this one represent the ideals of Panhuaxia culture in another sense; in spite of the political disunity of the era (the fact of diplomatic

[12] Pines (2002) 315.

[13] We hear a few lines earlier of a similar request from the Marquis of Wei.

negotiations belies claims of unity), there is sufficient shared culture that not only can the poems recited be recognized, but also their meaning can be communicated seamlessly. The commentarial tradition of the Han and later requires, of course, that these things be spelled out; we are told that the first poem makes a request for help to Zheng from Lu, and the second poem indicates that Lu has too many problems of its own to get involved. The third poem heightens the urgency of Zheng's request, and the fourth indicates Lu's agreement to come to Zheng's assistance.

Despite the commentaries' assurances, this anecdote is, from the perspective of the reader, ainetic. We are not offered explanations of what each of the poems is supposed to mean in context, or of what the substance or result of the negotiation is. We are not even given the texts of the poems themselves. The anecdote, and others like it, seems to invite us into its world, to interpellate us as members of the Huaxia elite of the Spring and Autumn period, even as it fails to give us the tools we would need to respond. The text represents a performative act of cultural negotiation and self-identification, creating a language that allows its characters to discuss their differences in shared terms. The text also enacts that performance for us as readers, allowing us to test our own level of cultural integration into Huaxia norms. Its pedagogical function in cosmopolitan terms is thus both as a paradigm and as a test.

In my interpretation of such diplomatic scenes, I draw on the work of two notable scholars who have treated this material in recent years. My approach owes much to the work of David Schaberg, whose own work demonstrates powerfully the ways in which the use of the *Songs* in the *Zuozhuan* is designed to enact a sense of cultural unity.[14] Schaberg, I think rightly, locates the enacting of this cultural unity especially in the Warring States era, and in the narrative of the *Zuozhuan* itself.[15] Skepticism concerning the applicability of this sense

[14] On the diplomatic incidents in particular, see Schaberg (2001) 234–43.

[15] Schaberg (2001) 234. In the context of Brooks (2003/04)'s understanding of the *Zuozhuan* as compiled in five layers over the course of the fourth century BC, in a context reflecting the gradual emergence of the bureaucratic state, the mass army, and the integration of the common people into the state, the notion that political affairs could be settled by the diplomatic use of elite culture would certainly represent an idealization of the past.

of Panhuaxia identity to the earlier Spring and Autumn period is warranted, although there are many scholars today who believe that the *Zuozhuan* reports, for the most part, authentic contemporary narratives of events, and may accurately record at least the broad outlines of speeches.[16] I differ from Schaberg mostly not, I think, in my aims, but in my emphases. Where his approach is more historically minded, I am more interested in the *Zuozhuan* as a literary text, and the diplomatic negotiations it represents as practices of verbal art. Although I am interested in the relationship between historical events and the narratives constructed around them, I am not interested *per se* in the historicity of the narratives.

A scholar with whom my views diverge more strongly is François Jullien. Jullien draws on a trope popular in Western writing about China, namely the opacity of intellectual or political discourse in the Chinese tradition. According to this view, things in Chinese are not said outright, but rather by indirection, using a complex code of cultural references, unintelligible to outsiders, yet readily legible to anyone possessing a classical education. Incidents such as our anecdote imply a stable relationship between signifying poem and signified political position. This assumption, perhaps implicit in the *Zuozhuan*, becomes explicit in later scholarship, where the meanings of a given diplomatic poetic performance are delineated in precise and confident terms.

This theme of discourse by indirection takes on further significance in the work of non-Chinese Sinologists, who bring an entirely different set of assumptions. In his book *Detour and Access: Strategies of Meaning in China and Greece*, Jullien identifies what he sees as opposing forms of diplomatic discourse in Ancient China and Ancient Greece, contrasting the explicit, detailed, and carefully argued speeches found in Thucydides with the diplomatic anecdotes involving the performance of poetry in the *Zuozhuan*:

> Each person is free to maneuver because he does so at a distance, under the cover of borrowed formulas. . . . Instead of listing arguments, it mobilizes energies; the art is less to persuade the other through reasoning than to shake his resolve. (Jullien 78)

[16] See especially Pines (2002) 13–54, which uses evidence of linguistic change to suggest that the various sections of the text were likely contemporary with the events they describe.

Elsewhere, Jullien argues that the more authoritarian political and intellectual culture of China, even in early periods, makes direct statement of political goals too dangerous, fostering the use of linguistic detour through commonly accepted cultural codes. Significantly, Jullien employs Mencius' maxim "without speaking, it is understood" 不言而喻 (盡心上 p. 233). Mencius uses the phrase of the spontaneous capacity of the man of virtue to ensure that his limbs move appropriately; Jullien, tellingly, understands it as an expression of the ideology of linguistic detour, a meaning it can scarcely bear.[17]

There are several difficulties with his argument. I note in passing that the Greek tradition itself shows its own fascination with obscure, encoded language, even or especially in politically charged situations. The *ainoi* of Pindar's victory odes, for example, often resonate in a political environment in which the legitimate constitutional order has been overthrown by a tyrant; the mingling of praise for that tyrant with civic mythologies and history, then, is a profoundly political act, one that I need not trace here. There are also many speeches in the *Zuozhuan* that articulate their political goals explicitly, without recourse to ainetic language. Rhetoric about the authoritarian East and the liberal West is at best unhelpful when examining the ancient world.

Moving from the political to the hermeneutic, the model of encrypted speech with which Jullien works is itself problematic. Such a mode of speech, in which everything can be said, through some agreed-upon code in which a signifying poem maps onto a signified political view, risks collapsing into one or another extreme. On the one hand, if the code is too readily accessible, then the marked language of poetry might, over time, become simply everyday language, in much the way that a euphemism can, through overuse, grow to have all the negative connotations of the word it is meant to obscure. On the other hand, if the code is too obscure, then communicative efficacy is lost. Ambiguity in diplomatic negotiations may be a virtue up to a certain point, but clarity has its virtues.

The *Zuozhuan* itself provides some of our best evidence for how comparatively casual the code must have been. More than a dozen poems not included in our *Canon of Songs* are cited in the *Zuozhuan*,

[17] Jullien 78.

using the same citation formulas as for canonical poems; these poems are unknown from other sources.[18] Indeed, given that we think today that the collection took its final form around the fourth century BC, that canon is not yet closed at the notional time of our anecdote; new poems can still be created to suit their times. There are frequent and significant variations between the texts we encounter in the *Zuozhuan* and those we find in the *Canon of Songs*, even when the same title is used; beyond the *Zuozhuan* the problem is more acute, with 25–40% of the characters in most excavated texts differing from those found in the transmitted texts.[19] Finally, as we have already seen, *Zuozhuan* narratives frequently rely on playful or counterintuitive interpretations of the poems, reading against the grain for complex reasons.

My own view builds on the work done in the previous chapter, and in particular on the difference between ainetic language used to address and indexical language used to refer. I am agnostic on the question of the extent to which these anecdotes reflect a genuine historical reality, although there is enough evidence to suggest that the quotation of the *Songs* in political contexts was a common practice. If we take seriously the idea that an episode like ours might actually be exemplary of anyone's behavior in the Spring and Autumn period, I believe we must then read its language as *ainos*. Rather than assume that there is a logical one-to-one correspondence between a given poem and its possible meaning in a political context, I think we must assume that the relationship between poem and politics is meant to be contingent and provocative.

Not only are we as readers meant to puzzle over the meaning of the negotiation, but the participants must also have done so as well, for this kind of event to have had its true meaning, as both the site of political exchange, and the space in which a cultural identity is forged. This holds true, I believe, whether the anecdotes we possess truly reflect Spring and Autumn era negotiations, or a Warring States reimagination of such negotiations. In either case, they represent the Panhuaxia moment, in which the classics are performance practices,

[18] For a complete list, see Zeng (1993). Recall that the recovered manuscript *Confucius' Discussion of the* Songs (ca. 375 BC) still includes songs that do not enter our *Canon of Songs*, and that there is no clear evidence that anyone attributed the editing of the classics to Confucius until the early Han.

[19] See Kern (2005). I discuss his point in more detail in Chapter 1.

and enact their meanings best in performance. In what follows, I trace two possible readings of our particular anecdote. One of these readings takes the Mao school's interpretations of the poems at face value (remembering of course that to do so is anachronistic, because the Mao school takes shape mostly under the Han).[20] I then develop an alternative reading, which also draws on commentaries, sometimes using evidence that is no more anachronistic than the Mao school, sometimes using scholarship from as recently as the eighteenth century. I aim to demonstrate that there are at least two possible interpretations of the negotiations said to have taken place at Fei, both plausible in their historical context. Beyond this, I hope to show something about the nature of the culture that the Eastern Zhou states claimed to share with each other (that it is a culture based on performance and the *ainos*, on the dynamic activation of ritual language within a specific context), and something about how the cosmopolitan reading strategies of the Han sought to reimagine that culture (as indexicalized, textualized, and stabilized). In so doing, I hope to supplement the picture of this passage presented by Jullien, whose insistence on indirection requires him, I believe, to place too much emphasis on stability of meaning.[21]

The Wild Geese (*Hongyan* 鴻雁) (*Songs* 181; p. 373)

Zijia of Zheng begins by singing *The Wild Geese*, from the *Minor Court Songs*:

> The wild geese are flying,
> *susu* go their wings.
> These men are on commission.
> There is pain and toil in the wilds.
> Alas! All these pitiable men.
> Alas! The widowers and widows.
>
> The wild geese are flying,
> they roost in the middle of the marsh.

[20] As I showed in the previous chapter, the text *Confucius' Discussion of the* Songs, again roughly contemporary with the earlier layers of the *Zuozhuan*, illustrates the differences between pre-Mao and Mao moralizing interpretations. Unfortunately, this manuscript does not discuss any of the poems deployed in our anecdote.

[21] For the reading, see Jullien 76–81.

These men are building an earth wall,
100 *tu* [of length] arise at once.
Although this is painful and toilsome,
at length we have peace at home.

The wild geese are flying,
sad is their cry, *ao-ao*!
These are wise men,
who say we are in pain and toiling.
Those are foolish men,
who say we proclaim our arrogance.

鴻雁于飛・肅肅其羽・之子于征・劬勞于野・
爰及矜人・哀此鰥寡・
鴻雁于飛・集于中澤・之子于垣・百堵皆作・
雖此劬勞・其究安宅・
鴻雁于飛・哀鳴嗷嗷・維此哲人・謂我劬勞・
維彼愚人・謂我宣驕・

Two major problems with interpreting this poem are how to handle the indexical phrase "these men," and deciding what to do with the geese. The early Chinese tradition had three ways of understanding the use of imagery in poetry, namely as *fu* or narrative description, *bi* or comparison, and *xing* or "affective image."[22] Where the wild geese would, as *fu*, be a diegetic component of the scenery, they might, as *bi*, symbolically represent a desire to return home or a longing for freedom, and could, as *xing*, perhaps instead simply evoke a feeling of sadness or loss, possibly more as a result of performance aspects of the song than of its text. In any event, the question of whether a given stanza in a *Canon of Songs* poem is a *fu*, a *bi*, or a *xing* was often controversial in traditional Chinese literary scholarship, and of course this decision often had a substantial impact on how the poem as a whole was interpreted.

Perhaps the most obvious reading of this poem takes it as representing the complaints of those building the wall. In the first stanza, we see the implied narrators of the poem bemoan their lot, whereas in the second stanza they acknowledge the usefulness of the work they have been assigned, and, in the third stanza, they express gratitude to someone (or some group), obviously in a position of superiority to

[22] For more on this issue, see Owen (1992) 45–6.

them. The Mao reading of the poem[23] differs from this naïve reading, not only in adding a political context, but also in its emphasis:

> *Wild Geese* praises King Xuan. The masses were scattered and dispersed, and none were fixed in their dwellings. He [King Xuan] was able to comfort them and return them home, establish them, give them peace and settle them. Even among the poor and the widowed, there was no one who did not find their place.
>
> 鴻雁, 美宣王也．萬民離散, 不安其居, 而能勞來還定安集之, 至于矜寡, 無不得其所焉．(Mao preface to *Wild Geese* (*Song* 181) p. 373)

The commentary and subcommentary in the Mao school expand this reading. According to the commentary, King Xuan (r. 826–780 BC)[24] inherited instability from his predecessor, King Li 厲 (r. 877–826 BC), but was able to restore order, beginning by resettling the people. The subcommentary further explains that this resettling involved noble officials, who are the "these people" referred to, who directed reconstruction activities, and that they are the officials to whom the poem is directed. The piece is then taken as a *xing*, with the wild geese evoking the sorrow of the people at their inability to return to their old homes, and the general wretchedness of their lot. The Mao reading, then, resolves figurative and indexical ambiguities in such a way as to provide a reading that celebrates the capacity of a centralized state to manage disasters.

My contrarian reading of this poem comes from Zhu Xi, a twelfth century AD Neo-Confucian scholar and one of the most influential figures in the Chinese intellectual tradition. His reading, though late in date, is, I believe, at least as plausible for early audiences as the also anachronistic Mao reading. Zhu follows most of the Mao reading, but rejects the connection with King Xuan, and rejects the identification of the *zhizi* 之子 (the "these people") of the first two stanzas as the nobles directing the rebuilding. Instead, he reorients the indexicality of the poem to suggest that the *zhizi* are the people themselves, singing of their toil, but also of the benefits that toil will bring them. Whereas he reads the first two stanzas as *xing*, he reads the third stanza as *bi*, with

[23] We do not have alternative readings of the poem from the Lu, Qi, or Han schools.

[24] We encountered King Xuan, and his troubled political times, at the beginning of Chapter 5.

the cries of the birds representing the cries of the masses, which those who do not understand (i.e., the nobles) will interpret as laziness, whereas those who do understand will know that the song comes from the bitter toil of the masses. Whether we follow the Mao reading or that of Zhu Xi, we are left with a deeply political message, though with opposite implications. Either the poem praises nobles for aiding in rebuilding a shattered society, or it condemns those same nobles for their indifference to the labor of the people in that rebuilding.[25]

Just as significantly in the ainetic context of *Zuozhuan* diplomatic negotiations, the poem itself enacts the notion of insiders and outsiders, of those who do and do not understand the cries of the workers. Those within the interpretative community within the poem understand that the cries are cries of pain, whereas those outside that community consider those cries as signs of arrogance. Zhu Xi's interpretation picks up on this dimension of the poem, but the Mao commentary's reading fails to account for who the foolish people of the final couplet might be. Just how this modeling of interpretation is to be understood in context, especially given the duplicity of Zheng's motives here, may become clear(er) as we move through the poems.

The Fourth Month (*Siyue* 四月) (*Song* 204; p. 441)

Ji Wenzi of Lu responds with *The Fourth Month*, another *Minor Court Song*:

> In the fourth month is summer,
> and in the sixth month the heat lessens.
> Were not my former ancestors men?
> How can they be callous to me?
> The autumn days are chilly,
> and the hundred grasses all decay.
> With the anguish of chaos and scattering,
> I will return home.
> The winter days are intense,

[25] Zhu (rprt. 1980) 119. As always, there need not be an authoritative answer to the question of who "these men" are. My point is rather that the question of who they are, rendered more urgent by textualization, seemed to demand answers from the commentators, and that uncertainty about who they might be must inform our attempts to read the diplomatic scene within which the poem is cited.

and the whirling winds blow rapidly.
None of the people are without happiness,
why am I alone harmed?
In the mountains are fine trees,
chestnuts and plums.
They are greatly destroyed and damaged;
who knows their faults?
Face the waters of the spring,
now clean and now muddy.
I daily meet with misfortune;
how may I say that I can be fortunate?
Vastly flow the Yangtze and the Han River,
controlling the southern lands.
Exhausted and worn out by service,
why does no one befriend me?
I am not an eagle or a hawk,
loftily flying toward the heavens.
I am not a greater or lesser sturgeon,
diving and leaping into the depths.
In the mountains are turtle-feet and thornfern (plants),
in the marshes are the medlar and the *yi* tree.
A nobleman composed this song
to make known his lament.

四月維夏・六月徂暑・先祖匪人・胡寧忍予・
秋日淒淒・百卉具腓・亂離瘼矣・爰其適歸・
冬日烈烈・飄風發發・民莫不穀・我獨何害・
山有嘉卉・侯栗侯梅・廢為殘賊・莫知其尤・
相彼泉水・載清載濁・我日構禍・曷云能穀・
滔滔江漢・南國之紀・盡瘁以仕・寧莫我有・
匪鶉匪鳶・翰飛戾天・匪鱣匪鮪・潛逃于淵・
山有蕨薇・隰有杞棣・君子作歌・維以告哀・

The final line of this poem has one of the rare authorial *sphrageis* in the *Canon of Songs* discussed in the previous chapter, one that again conceals as much as it reveals.[26] In view of my discussions of indexicality in performance, such a closing is obviously well suited to a blame-poem designed for reuse and adaptation to new epichoric and temporal contexts. Whatever the originary context, the poem itself gains

[26] For a list of the other poems that include this sort of indirect *sphragis*, see Nylan (2001) 85.

much of its meaning over time from its repeated reenactment, and from the repeated use of such reenactments in scenes of authorship such as our own. We see a basic theme elaborated, in this case lamentation for a wretched state of affairs by a man of noble status. Much of the poem is clearly *fu*, or narration, although the animal imagery present throughout is usually read as *xing*, or affective imagery. Once again the Mao school takes the generic political overtones of the text of the poem and renders them concrete and specific through connection to a single and specific political moment.[27] As I have already shown, there is a tendency in the Mao school to interpret the ordering of the *Canon of Songs* as an aid to its interpretation, and consequently, *The Fourth Month*, which occurs about twenty poems after *The Wild Geese* in the text, is interpreted as representing a later historical period. In this case, it is the rule of King You 幽, King Xuan's successor from 780 to 769 BC, who presides over the collapse of the Western Zhou:

In *The Fourth Month* a great official critiques King You. Those who held office were greedy and cruel, the feudal states were plotting calamities, and resentment and chaos arose on all sides.

四月, 大夫刺幽王也 · 在位貪殘, 下國構禍, 怨亂並興焉 · (Mao preface to *The Fourth Month* (Song 204), p. 441).

The poem is thus indexicalized to match a historical situation. The match is made on a quite detailed level – the subcommentary matches each of the three clauses of the preface containing the substance of the critique to specific lines of text. As in the case of *The Wild Geese*, Zhu Xi here agrees that the poem represents a lamentation for the state of affairs, but notes that there are no words placing blame on anyone (無所歸咎之詞也).[28] In other respects, however, his reading essentially follows that of the Mao school.

My alternative reading here begins with a suggestion in the subcommentary edited by Kong Yingda 孔穎達, which mostly reflects scholarship from the third through seventh century AD. The subcommentary, citing Wang Su 王肅, places the poem at the decline of the Zhou state, but focuses on the motivations its composer. This argument suggests

[27] Again, we do not have any clear trace of the interpretations offered by the Lu, Qi, and Han schools.

[28] Zhu (rprt. 1980) 149.

that the poem expresses frustration with a long military campaign, which has stretched from the fourth month into the sixth,[29] interfering with the normal schedule of ritual and sacrifice and causing the ancestors to fail to support their descendants in their military aims. The subcommentary also explores, while rejecting, the possibility that the mention of the months and seasons is to be read as *xing* rather than as *fu*, as evocative of the gradual decline of the Zhou dynasty rather than as a literal account of the passage of time, a reading that would obviously be at odds with Wang Su's interpretation.[30]

Further support for this reading comes from the *Kongcongzi* 孔叢子, an eclectic text purporting to have been composed by an eighth-generation descendant of Confucius, but in reality likely composed after the second century AD:[31]

> Confucius was reading the *Poems*, and reached the *Xiao Ya*. He sighed deeply and said, "In the *Zhounan* and *Zhaonan* (sections of the *Guofeng*), I see how the Way of Zhou achieved its fulfillment . . . in *Siyue*, I see a filial son thoughtful about the sacrifices."[32]
>
> 孔子讀詩, 及小雅, 喟然而嘆曰, 吾於周南召南見周道之所以盛也 . . . 於四月見孝子之思祭也 .

The seventeenth-century scholar He Kai follows this interpretation, arguing that the poet is being sent on a campaign in the South (hence the reference to the [southern] Yangtze and Han Rivers, a detail of the poem the main strand of the Mao school ignores), that the campaign is long and difficult, and that he longs to return home and perform sacrifices to his ancestors. He also assigns the poem to the era of King Li 厲 (877–826 BC), that is, to 50 to 100 years earlier than the Mao interpretation would suggest.[33] His reading also offers extensive interpretations of the significance of various images, arguing that the "hundred grasses" in the second stanza, with their decay, represent the increasing disorder and suffering under prolonged military

[29] These numbered months are supposed to be from the Xia dynastic calendar, rather than from the calendar then in use, and the fourth and sixth months are said to correspond to early and high summer respectively.

[30] Pp. 441–2.

[31] See Ariel (1996) 56–69 for a discussion of the dating and authorship of the *Kongcongzi*. If Ariel is right, the *Kongcongzi* is roughly contemporary with the later layers of the Mao commentaries as we have them.

[32] Song Xian, ed. (rprt. 1937) 21–2.

[33] He Kai vol 4 *juan* 16 p. 21b.

campaigning. He reads the image of the Yangtze and Han Rivers both as *fu*, marking the connection of the poem to a southern campaign, and as *bi*, with the great rivers demarcating the land in the same way that a great ruler should divide honors among his feudal lords. The lines "In the mountains are turtle-feet and thornfern (plants), in the marshes are the medlar and the *yi* tree" he takes as *fu*, claiming that all four of these plants flourish during the fourth month of the Xia calendar, and are thus appropriate to the season of the poem. He also argues that these plants are edible, suggesting that their presence in the poem hints at the poet's desire to retreat from the disastrous state of the world and to live as a recluse.

The eighteenth-century scholar Ma Ruichen offers yet another reading of the poem. Where He Kai took the indications of time in the poem to be *fu*, representing the literal passage of time while on campaign, Ma, in line with one of the interpretations offered in the subcommentary, takes the temporal indications as *xing*, with the progression from summer through autumn and winter evoking the progressive decline of the Zhou dynasty. He also takes 先祖非人 "Were our ancestors not men?" to mean 先祖非仁 "Were our ancestors not humane?" – a philologically dubious if convenient interpretation (in that *ren* "humane" is in general a usage later than the *Songs*).[34] For Ma, *The Fourth Month* becomes a poem of generalized lamentation for the decline of the Zhou dynasty (in an echo of the possibility rejected in the subcommentary) and an appeal to ancestors to right the wrongs of the present day. That this poem encodes some narrative of decline and frustration is evident; as usual, however, it is unclear how to link those palpable emotions to specific historical contexts. Although their methods and conclusions vary, each of our scholars has attempted to read the text of the poem as indexicalized, and then to resolve its indexicality.

Galloping (*Zaichi* 載馳), fourth stanza (*Song* 54; p. 124)

At this point, Zijia replies, not with a whole poem, but with the fourth stanza of the poem *Galloping*. Although the reference to a particular stanza of a poem implies a relative degree of fixity as to the content

[34] Ma *juan* 21 p635.

of specific songs, the fact that the Mao school thinks it has five stanzas whereas other early sources think it has four belies the fluidity of the texts of the *Songs* in this era.[35] The passage ostensibly performed by Zijia reads

> I'd go in these wilds,
> where the wheat is full and tall.
> I'd plead my case in the great states,
> but who would I use as an intermediary? Who would come to my help?
> Great officials and gentlemen,
> do not take offence at me.
> The hundred things you think on
> are not as good as what I think on.
>
> 我行其野・芃芃其麥・控于大邦・誰因誰極・
> 大夫君子・無我有尤・百爾所思・不如我所之・

Where the previous two poems in this diplomatic poetic exchange were both from the *Minor Court Songs*, this poem is from the *Airs of Yong* 鄘風, which in the historical record is known as part of the larger state of Wei 衛.[36] In other words, where the previous two poems (and the final one) present themselves as from the Zhou court, and thus as models of an idealized Panhuaxia past, this poem, represented as from a regional court, can more easily be understood by the Mao school as representative of a dysfunctional epichoric present. As we have grown to expect, the Mao preface for this poem is highly specific in the interpretation it offers:

> "Galloping" is composed by the wife of Duke Mu of Xu. She pitied that her ancestral state had been toppled and had destroyed itself, and that she could not aid it. Duke Yi of Wei had been exterminated by the Di people, and the people of the state had been dispersed and were living in the open at the city of Cao. The wife of Duke Mu of Xu pitied the destruction of Wei, and was pained that Xu was small, and that its strength was insufficient to aid Wei.

[35] Chen Huan (1995b) 74 offers a useful discussion of the controversy on the division into stanzas of this poem.

[36] Both the *Airs of Yong* and the *Airs of Bei* are conventionally understood to belong to the historical state of Wei. See the excursus on the states included in the *Airs of the States* at the end of Chapter 5.

She longed to return there, and to console her elder brother, but as propriety would not allow it, she composed[37] this poem.

載馳許穆夫人作也．閔其宗國顛覆,自傷不能救也．衛懿公為狄人所 滅, 國人分散, 露於漕邑, 許穆夫人閔衛之亡, 傷許之小, 力不能救思歸, 唁其兄, 又義不得, 故賦是詩也．(Mao Preface to *Song* 54, p. 124)

Drawing on the subcommentary and the *Zuozhuan*, we learn that Duke Yi, the brother of the supposed author of this poem, is said to have died in 660 BC. This date is of course relatively late in the compositional history of the *Canon of Songs*, and it is no surprise to learn that this poem is at the end of the *Airs of Yong*. The *Airs of Yong* themselves are known as *bian*, or deviant, poems,[38] and so the position this poem occupies at the end of its section suggests the appropriateness of a reading in which the rulers of Wei suffer for their folly. Unusually for a poem lacking in an explicit poetic signature, the Mao preface to *Zaichi* identifies a specific composer for the poem.[39]

Equally unusually, the *Zuozhuan* corroborates the Mao commentarial tradition. Under the year 659 BC, there is a lengthy description of the fall of Wei, from the extravagance and eccentricity of Duke Yi (a Nero figure who is said to have treated storks with the respect due to high officials) to the total defeat of Wei's army at the hand of the Di people. Duke Mu of Xu's wife's sister, who was the wife of Duke Huan of Song, seems to have had more influence over her husband than her sister had over Duke Mu:

First he escaped to Qi. When they [Wei and Qi] were defeated, Duke Huan of Song met [the refugees] at the river, and by night ferried them across. The population of Wei remaining, male and female, was 730 people, and adding in the population of Gong and Teng, the number was five thousand people. Duke Dai was installed, and placed in a hut at the city of Cao. The wife of Duke Mu of Xu recited the *Zaichi*.

先適齊, 及敗．宋桓公逆諸河, 宵濟．衛之遺民男女七百有三十人．益之以共滕之民為五千人．立戴公以廬于曹．許穆夫人賦載馳．(*Zuozhuan*, Duke Min 11 [659 BC], p. 191).

[37] Note that the Mao preface clearly interprets *fu* as "compose" here, as shown in the first sentence when the Wife of Xu is said also to have *zuo* the poem.

[38] See Chapter 5 for a discussion of "orthodox" and "deviant" poems.

[39] The Han, Lu, and Qi schools concurred in connecting this poem to the wife of Duke Mu of Xu.

Note that the word translated here as "recited" is *fu* 賦, also used in the Mao commentary for the same passage; in view of the discussion in Chapter 1, it is impossible to tell whether it means "compose" or "perform" here. Does the *Zuozhuan* say here that the wife of Xu is "composing" *Galloping*, creating a poem that will express her sentiments, or is she instead "performing" it, drawing on a repertoire of already known songs to achieve the same effect? The ambiguity of *fu* does not, of course, imply that the distinction between performance and composition did not exist in the days of the *Zuozhuan* itself. We are left with the possibility that the wife of Xu was herself making use of an earlier poem (or was imagined by the author of the *Zuozhuan* passage as having done so). Given its predilections for indexical and nonainetic readings, we can be reasonably certain that the Mao commentary imagines the poem as having been composed by the wife of Xu.

The commentarial tradition is largely in agreement in connecting this poem to the defeat of Wei and to the wife of Xu, due largely to specific markers within the text. The first stanza of the poem begins 載馳載驅．歸唁衛侯．驅馬悠悠．言至于漕．("Galloping the horses and driving the horses, to return to console the Marquis of Wei. Driving the horses far, to arrive at Cao"), whereas in the third stanza we have a reference to Xu in the line 許人尤之 ("The people of Xu blame me"). Our experiences in the previous chapter will have, I hope, demonstrated the ambiguity of the language of naming in the *Songs*, and indeed from a very early point in the tradition we encounter alternative interpretations of the poem.

The *Lienüzhuan* 烈女傳, or *Record of Exemplary Women*, a text by the first century BC scholar and poet Liu Xiang 劉向,[40] contains a brief discussion of the wife of Xu. In this discussion, an account is provided of the composition of the poem *Galloping*:

> At the time of the defeat, the Wife of Xu drove her horse and offered condolence; the Marquis of Wei thereupon regretted this, and wrote a poem saying, "Galloping the horses and driving the horses, to return to console the Marquis of Wei. Driving the horses far, to arrive at Cao. A great one has crossed land and river, but my heart is made sorrowful. Because this was not pleasing to

[40] And therefore from nearly the same period as the Mao commentaries and also drawing on older traditions.

me, why not return home?[41] I see you as wrong, and my thoughts will not stray far." A gentleman (*junzi*) would consider as excellent this man's beneficence and far-sightedness."

當敗之時, 許夫人馳驅而弔唁, 衛侯因疾之, 而作詩云：「載馳載驅, 歸唁衛侯, 驅馬悠悠, 言至于漕, 大夫跋涉, 我心則憂, 既不我嘉, 不能旋反, 視爾不臧, 我思不遠．」君子善其慈惠而遠識也．(列女傳．許穆夫人 p. 94 Zhang)

An earlier portion of the *Record of Exemplary Women* passage on the wife of Xu illuminates the significance of this reading. According to this text, the wife of Xu, when young, was sought in marriage by both Xu and the much larger and more important state of Qi 齊. The young woman argues with her nurse, claiming that it would be poor policy to marry her to the ruler of a small and nearby state that would be unable to help Wei in the event of an invasion. Her advice is ignored, with the result that when Wei is later invaded, her husband, the Duke of Xu, is, as predicted, unable to be of assistance. For the author of the *Record of Exemplary Women*, then, *Galloping* becomes a poem, not about the wife of the Duke of Xu's regret about being unable to return to Wei, but about the Marquis of Wei's own regret at not having heeded his sister's advice and married her to a strategically more valuable ally.

In interpreting the performance of the fourth stanza of the *Zaichi* in our anecdote, we must also contend with the performance of the same stanza elsewhere in the *Zuozhuan*. Under the nineteenth year of Duke Xiang (553 BC), we hear that, when the states of Jin and Qi made peace, Lu became worried for its own safety. Mushu of Lu thereupon arranges a meeting with officials from Jin, in order to secure their alliance:

Qi and Jin were at peace, and swore a treaty at Dasui. Thereupon Mushu [of Lu] met Fan Xuanzi [of Jin] at Ke. Mushu saw Shuxiang [also of Jin], and sang the fourth stanza of *Galloping*. Shuxiang said, "How can I dare not to receive this command?" But Mushu [sc. later] said, "Qi is still not yet [at peace with us]. It is not possible for us not to fear them. So let us fortify Wucheng."

齊及晉平．盟于大隧．故穆叔會范宣子于柯．穆叔見叔向．賦載馳之四章．叔向曰．胙敢不承命．穆叔曰．齊猶未也．不可以不懼．乃城武城．(*Zuozhuan* Duke Xiang 19 (553 BC) p. 587)

[41] Following Wen Yiduo's interpretation of *neng*能 as *ning*寧 (Wen (1976) Vol. 4. 136). Wen rejects the *Lienüzhuan's* overall reading of the poem, arguing instead that the poem is written by the wife of Xu in protest against officials from her husband's state who disapproved of her return.

This passage is not consistent with the Mao school's interpretation of *Galloping*, that the duchess desired to return home to Wei, but is closer to the interpretation offered in the *Record of Exemplary Women*. Although the poem is not being used here to express regret over a marriage alliance rejected, its use would seem to be incorporated under the larger rubric of a smaller state recognizing the need for aid from a larger state. This interpretation, similar to that offered in the *Record of Exemplary Women* although lacking its specificity, further complicates the picture of what the poem might mean in the context of the negotiations between Zheng and Lu in 613 BC. As we have seen in the previous chapter, even when the use of proper names suggests that interpretation of a poem will be straightforward, the reality is quite different.

Gathering Thornferns (*Caiwei* 采薇), fourth stanza (*Song* 167; p. 331)

The response to this stanza, and the final statement in the poetic conversation between Zheng and Lu, is offered by Ji Wenzi of Lu. He sings the fourth stanza of six of one of the *Minor Court Songs*, a poem entitled *Gathering Thornferns*:

> What is this lushness?
> It is the flower of the cherry tree.
> What chariot is that?
> It is the lord's chariot.
> His war chariot is yoked,
> the four steeds mighty.
> How dare one remain settled?
> In one month, three victories.
>
> 彼爾維何・維常之華・彼路斯何・君子之車・
> 戎車既駕・四牡業業・豈敢定居・一月三捷・

The Mao school's reading of this poem is similar to that for *Galloping*, in that both involve campaigns against non-Huaxia populations, in this case the Xianyun 玁狁 people of the northern frontier. The Xianyun are in fact invoked in the first stanza, but the era in which this campaign occurred is not made clear by the text. Here, as often before, the poem's position within the collection seems to have influenced its interpretation for the Mao school. *Gathering Thornferns* is the seventh poem (out of 74) in the *Minor Court Songs* section of the *Canon of Songs*,

and its early position and status as one of the orthodox *Minor Court Songs* leads to a connection with the early stages of the Zhou dynasty, and therefore with success on the campaign, a reading difficult to reconcile with the poem's closing lines:

> Now, as we return, the snow falls abundantly.
> Our road is long and slow, there is thirst and hunger.
> Our hearts are pained and sad, and no one understands our sorrow.
>
> 今我來思・雨雪霏霏・行道遲遲・載渴載飢・
> 我心傷悲・莫知我哀・

The Mao edition, strangely if predictably, reads this poem as being sung in anticipation of victory. The poem was read in connection with the two poems following, *Sending out the Chariots* and *The Russet-Pear Tree*, forming between them a picture of the beginning and end of the campaign:

Gathering Thornferns is about sentry duty guarding against barbarians on the frontier. In the time of King Wen, there was suffering from the Kunyi people to the west and difficulties with the Xianyun to the north. By the command of the Son of Heaven, a general and troops were ordered to guard against the barbarians on the frontier, in order to protect the Central States.[42] *Gathering Thornferns* was sung to send the troops off, the *Chuju* to reward their return, and the *Didu* for their diligent return.

采薇・遣戍役也・文王之時・西有昆夷之患・北有玁狁之難・以天子之命・命將率・遣戍役・以守中國・故歌采薇以遣之・出車以勞還・杕杜以勤歸也・(p. 331)

As Chen Huan points out, the reference to the Kunyi and the Xianyun (underlined in my translation above) precisely parallels a sentence in the *History of the Later Han Dynasty* (*Hou Han Shu*) describing the time of King Wen and of his father, Ji Li, in another complicated relationship between poem and historical event.[43] The *Hou Han Shu* passage can be read (and Chen Huan does so) as corroborating evidence for the dating of the poem, demonstrating that King Wen fought a successful campaign against the Xianyun and lending plausibility to the claim that this poem was composed to reflect that moment. At the same time, the Mao preface to *Gathering Thornferns*

[42] This phrase is the source of the modern name for the political state of China, *Zhongguo*. For the history of this phrase, see for example Chang (2007) 39.

[43] Chen (1995b) 200.

predates the *History of the Later Han Dynasty* by several centuries, with the latter presumably borrowing its phrasing from the former. This sets up an opposing chain of evidence, by which the commentary on the preface lends substance and form to a historical account based on slender evidence. It is unclear whether the historical episode is constructed to fit the interpretation of the poem, or the interpretation constructed to fit the episode.

The act of gathering thornferns (and of singing about gathering them) had another important association in early Zhou history and mythology, one often neglected in discussion of this poem, which is with Bo Yi and Shu Ji, the famous loyalists of the Shang dynasty, who refused "to eat the grain of Zhou" after the conquest. Bo and Shu famously lived in exile on Shouyang Mountain, subsisting on thornferns (and composing a song of protest that mentions those thornferns) before dying of starvation.[44] Eating thornferns, and then singing of them (specifically in the formative years of the Zhou dynasty), thus suggests a starvation diet while also evoking issues of injustice, cruelty, suffering, and rule by the unrighteous. *Gathering Thornferns*' position early in the *Minor Court Odes* has established it as *zheng*, or orthodox, and thus as a positive reflection on a campaign against the Xianyun, whether under King Wen or later. As we have seen, however, the language of the final stanza, and the associations summoned up by reference to gathering thornferns, certainly leave open a darker reading of the poem.

Two of the other schools of *Songs* interpretation, the Lu and the Qi, appear to have connected this poem, not with King Wen's successful campaign against the Xianyun in the eleventh century BC, but with a much less successful campaign fought by King Yi 懿 (899/7–873 BC) against the northern and western tribes.[45] This claim has the virtue

[44] *Shi Ji* 64, p. 2122.

[45] See Wang (rprt. 1987) 580; especially *History of the Han*'s treatise on the Xiongnu: "When we reach the era of King Mu's grandson King Yi, the royal court was in decline, the Rongdi (Western and Northern tribes) were invading, and the Central States were despotically ruled. As the Central States were covered in their sorrows, the poets began to write; they were angry and wrote, 'Broken are families, broken are homes, it is the fault of the Xianyun.'" These lines come from the first stanza of *Gathering Thornferns*: 至穆王之孫懿王時, 王室遂衰, 戎狄交侵, 暴虐中國, 中國被其苦, 詩人始作, 疾而歌之, 曰:「靡室靡家, 玁允之故。」(p. 3744). For the general historical context, see Li (2006) 99.

of making the poem more intelligible; the tone of *Gathering Thornferns* is simply too pessimistic to justify the celebratory reading of the Mao school, and Wang Xianqian, in editing the remains of the three schools, rightly favors the Lu/Qi reading. At the same time, we are left with a typical problem of indexicalization; the poem itself makes clear reference to the enemy being engaged, but does not identify the king or any of his generals. As such, the poem could point to any campaign against the northern and western tribes (and there were many), in much the same way that (for example) Bob Dylan's *Blowin' in the Wind* has been used as a song of protest against both the Vietnam and Iraq wars. Songs of protest during war, like rituals, can operate both canonically and self-referentially, and although the Lu/Qi reading is a more plausible one than the Mao reading, we have in fact no way of knowing for which war the poem was originally composed.

There remains another possible darker reading; historical sources suggest that King Wuding of the Shang thanked Ji Li, King Wen's father, for his loyal service by having him killed. This is not the generally accepted view. The *Shi Ji* simply records his death without commenting on its cause,[46] whereas the early philosophical text the *Lüshi Chunqiu* 呂氏春秋 argues that his death was due to his exhausting efforts on behalf of the Shang state.[47] A purported fragment of the *Bamboo Annals*, transmitted to us in a variety of sources,[48] suggests the more sinister interpretation of his death. This interpretation is certainly not one generally endorsed; for our purposes, however, it is not so much important to establish that Ji Li was murdered (or even that he might have been murdered), but rather to demonstrate that the account of this incident was known in relatively early times, which the references to the *Bamboo Annals* would appear to do. It therefore should be considered in the interpretation of *Gathering Thornferns*, and specifically the interpretation of its deployment in our *Zuozhuan* anecdote.

[46] Sima Qian's entire discussion of Ji Li in the *Basic Annals of Zhou* (*Shi Ji* 4, p. 116) reads as follows: 季歷立, 是為公季 · 公季修古公遺道, 篤於行義, 諸侯順之 · 公季卒, 子昌立 · ("And Ji Li ascended to the title, and was known as Duke Ji. Duke Ji cultivated the worthy Way of Duke, Gu, and was profound in his conduct and righteousness. All the lords followed him. When Duke Ji died, Zichang ascended . . .").

[47] *Lüshi chunqiu* 首時, p. 344. "King Ji Li was wearied and died, and King Wen [his son] regretted it" 王季歷困而死, 文王苦之.

[48] The *Jin Shu* 晉書, the *Beitang Shuchao* 北堂書鈔, and the *Shi Tong* 史通. See Fang and Wang (1981). On the *Bamboo Annals* generally, see Shaughnessey (2006) 185–257.

Recall, too, that He Kai's reading of *The Fourth Month* also suggests the recluse who withdraws from the world and eats thornferns (and other wild plants) in a marginal geographic location; the possible parallels between the two poems reinforce the theme in this poem.

There are thus many reasons to doubt that the Mao school's reading of *Gathering Thornferns* would have been operative at our summit at Fei. It is unclear whether the poem itself refers to a specific campaign; if it does, it might refer to that fought (and lost) under King Yi in the ninth century, not under King Wen in the eleventh. Finally, even a reading of the poem that did associate it with King Wen might well have associations rather darker than those suggested by the Mao school. It remains to be seen how our various interpretations of this and the other poems might influence our reading of our diplomatic anecdote.

Reading the *Zuozhuan* Account of the Summit at Fei

The content and tone of the negotiations, as well as their success, are conveyed to us solely through the performance of portions of four poems, and through a few brief reactions to them. As we have said already, the legibility of the anecdote (whether in the *Zuozhuan*'s time or in ours) is dependent upon assumptions about both the fixity of the *text* of the *Canon of Songs*, and the fixity of its *interpretation*. We have seen some evidence for uncertainty concerning the textual fixity of these poems. Specifically, because the Mao preface takes the *Zaichi* as having five stanzas, and later editions concur in reading it in four, we are uncertain what is meant by "the fourth stanza of the *Zaichi*." We have also seen considerable room for speculation as to the significance of each of these poems, in most cases corroborated by reference to relatively early texts. But can these alternative readings render our *Zuozhuan* anecdote intelligible?

Before addressing that question, let us first construct a reading based on the Mao interpretations of the poems (itself, remember, an anachronistic reading for the *Zuozhuan*). In this reading, Zheng opens by praising the Duke of Lu for his ability to restore calm in the face of previous disaster, hinting thereby at their desire for peace with Jin. Lu responds, first by endorsing this reading of the previous poem, and then by supporting the restoration of stability through reference

to a ruler who failed to do so.[49] Zheng responds with a lamentation, hinting at the possibility of a disaster befalling Zheng similar to that which afflicted Wei in *Galloping*, and bemoaning, in the style of the wife of Xu, their inability to improve their position singlehandedly. Lu's final statement, matching Zheng's barbarian imagery, suggests that success will follow both Zheng and Lu in their ventures, just as it followed Ji Li. The conversation thus concludes to the satisfaction of both parties.

This reading seems largely consistent, offering a plausible line of negotiation between Zheng and Lu that also reads the poems plausibly. This reading does, to be sure, require the reader to ignore certain aspects of the poems: the complaint of the speakers that foolish people do not understand their cries in *Wild Geese*, the darker overtones of Southern exile in *The Fourth Month*, a sense of frustration at the ineffectiveness of allies in *Galloping*, and the pessimism about war we find in *Gathering Thornferns*. Interpretations are often most interesting for that which they exclude, and in the case of the Mao reading of these poems what they exclude is uniformly more pessimistic than what they incorporate. This leads, of course, to a more optimistic reading of the negotiations, in which messages are received clearly, and everyone can go home satisfied. As a result, the cosmopolitan and textualized reading of this anecdote (and of the underlying poems) leaves its reader fairly confident (a) that he or she has understood the meaning of the episode, (b) that that meaning was transparent to the actors in the episode, (c) that the poems themselves uncomplicatedly praise the founders of the Western Zhou and condemn their decadent successors, and (d) that negotiations between states on the basis of the *Songs* can lead to shared understanding and, therefore, perhaps, to peace.

The resolutions made by the Mao readings are not, however, inevitable. If *The Fourth Month* indeed condemns King You for failing to maintain order in his state, then its performance by a Lu official in this context could also suggest an implicit critique of the failings

[49] This reading turns *The Fourth Month* into a sort of "para-praise," to coin a term matching Gentili's para-invective (Gentili (1988); see also Chapter 5). That is, it praises Lu by comparison to the failures of King You.

of Zheng's own ruler (especially in the context of Ji Wenzi reading the performance of *Wild Geese* as praise for the Duke of Lu). If this were the case, then it is not clear how the negotiations could proceed to the seeming satisfaction of both parties, with the seemingly parallel statements of the second pair of songs. That pair of songs itself, although consistent enough in tone with the reading of the anecdote offered above, seem somewhat ill suited on thematic terms. Zheng is not threatened by "barbarian" outsiders, but by the Huaxia state of Jin. It is also unclear why *Gathering Thornferns*, which represents disaster as having already occurred, should be the vehicle for Zheng to represent its fears of attack. Clearly, although a reading of the *Zuozhuan* anecdote in terms of the Mao interpretations of the poems is possible and indeed plausible, it is not sufficiently comprehensive and effective to preclude the examination of other alternatives. The Mao reading is itself, in other words, a highly selective and contrarian reading of the poems – not to mention, of course, an anachronistic one.

In constructing my own reading of the anecdote, I can rely not only on the suggestions of two thousand years of commentary, but even on the Ruist tradition itself, at least as that pertains to the *Zuozhuan* rather than the *Songs*. The orthodox commentary on the *Zuozhuan* by Du Yu 杜預 (222–84) offers a very different interpretation of the anecdote, one that evokes the Mao school, but simultaneously seems to rely on other readings of the poems as much as or more than on Mao. Du Yu's commentary claims that Zijia sings *Wild Geese*, not to praise Lu, but to evoke sympathy for the plight of Zheng:

> *Wild Geese* is one of the *Minor Court Songs*. It takes the meaning that the lords pitied the toils of the widows and widowers who had to journey far. It says that the state of Zheng was alone and weak, and wished to cause the Marquis of Lu to return to Jin and comfort them.
>
> 鴻鴈詩小雅. 義取侯伯哀恤鰥寡有征行之勞. 言鄭國寡弱. 欲使魯侯還晉恤之. (commentary on *Zuozhuan*, Duke Wen 13 [613 BC] p. 333)

In a sense, the commentary on the *Zuozhuan*, by focalizing the plight of the masses in *Wild Geese* rather than the virtue of the officials who aid them, anticipates Zhu Xi's reinterpretation of the poem. In contrast to the implicit praise of a ruler in the Mao reading, the reading offered by the *Zuozhuan* commentary stresses the plight in which Zheng claims to find itself, and, although clearly conveying the hope that Lu will hear

their cries, nonetheless does not presume success in this endeavor. Ji Wenzi of Lu's response is similarly shifted in emphasis:

> Ji Wenzi's reply means that Lu also has the fear of being a small and weak state. "Wenzi performed *The Fourth Month*."[50] *The Fourth Month* is one of the *Minor Court Songs*. It takes the meaning that it was a time of excessive campaigning, and they longed to return home to perform the sacrifices. They did not want to be made to return to Jin.
>
> 言亦同有微弱之憂・文子賦四月・四月詩小雅・義取行役踰時・思歸祭祀・不欲為還晉. (commentary on *Zuozhuan*, Duke Wen 13 [613 BC] p. 333)

Rather than emphasize either Lu's willingness to impose some sort of order, or a critique by Lu of Zheng's failings, this reading would seem to use *The Fourth Month* to match Zheng's use of *Wild Geese* in describing Lu's own weakness and vulnerability. By this reading, Ji Wenzi's statement, "My humble lord does not altogether lack this quality," does not indicate that Ji has seen the performance of *Wild Geese* as praise for Lu. Instead, it uses the opportunity to point out that Lu is no more powerful than Zheng and is weary with military campaigning and with diplomatic visits and has a desire to tend to affairs at home. Where our other readings have proposed that Lu is here either accepting Zheng's request, or reproving it for making it, this reading has Lu protest its own inability to act, effectively declining to aid Zheng. This interpretation of the use of *The Fourth Month* in this anecdote seems to reflect the interpretations of the poem offered by Wang Su and in the *Kongcongzi*, rather than that offered by the Mao school.

Although the *Zuozhuan*'s reading of Zijia's performance of the fourth stanza of the *Zaichi* follows the Mao school's reading somewhat more closely, the tone is noticeably different:

> *Galloping* is from the *Airs of Yong*. From the fourth stanza, the meaning is that a small state has an emergency and wishes to call upon a large state for help.
>
> 載馳詩鄘風. 四章以下. 義取小國有急. 欲引大國以救助. (commentary on *Zuozhuan*, Duke Wen 13 [613 BC] p. 333)

[50] This sentence is the lemma from the text of the *Zuozhuan*, on which the remainder of the passage comments.

The language of this interpretation is strongly reminiscent of that used in the *Record of Exemplary Women* to explain the Duke of Wei's composition of this poem. A "thin description" of the situation would yield essentially the same reading suggested by the Mao interpretation, namely, that Zheng is appealing for help from Lu. A thicker description would, however, take note of the significant change in voice implied by the two interpretations. From the Mao position, Zheng's ambassador is adopting the voice of the wife of Xu. The use here of the voice of a woman, unable to effect any change in her situation or in that of her state, suggests that Zheng is claiming to be helpless itself, and to be utterly dependent on Lu for assistance. In contrast, the reading inspired by the *Record of Exemplary Women* (and followed by the commentary on the *Zuozhuan*) would suggest that Zheng is here taking the voice of the Duke of Wei, who regretted that he had married his sister to the ruler of a state too small to be of assistance to him in his time of need. Although the appeal to Lu for help is obviously still the dominant message here, this reading would carry a secondary message, hinting that Zheng is frustrated by Lu's own smallness, weakness, and lack of willingness to act, and that it might perhaps seek help elsewhere if Lu is unwilling or unable to be of assistance.

In this context, the significance of Lu's response must also shift:

> *Gathering Thornferns* is a poem from the *Minor Court Songs*. It takes its meaning from "How dare we remain settled? In one month, three victories!" He is requested by Zheng to return [to Jin], and he dare not remain settled.
>
> 采薇詩小雅・義取其豈敢定居一月三捷・許為鄭還・不敢安居, (commentary on *Zuozhuan*, Duke Wen 13 [613 BC] p. 333)

Here again, although the thin description remains the same – Lu agrees to help Zheng – the tone has shifted noticeably. The *Zuozhuan* commentary's reading suggests that Lu has understood Zheng's message as representing a veiled threat, and Lu therefore capitulates to Zheng's demand that the Duke of Lu go to Jin. The quotation from *Gathering Thornferns* emphasized in the *Zuozhuan* commentary implies a zeal for combat and victory. The fact that this zeal is entirely at odds with the position previously taken by Lu, however, suggests that Ji Wenzi of Lu is speaking here from the recognition that he must agree to Zheng's demands, rather than from genuine enthusiasm for

continued diplomacy and struggle. Although the surface meaning of the performance of *Gathering Thornferns* is clearly still the same, the *Zuozhuan* commentary's interpretation seems close to our darker reading of the poem. Just like the poem, Ji Wenzi's performance seems to celebrate the campaign, while covertly regretting its cost.

The interpretation of the anecdote based on the Mao readings of the poems would seem to imply that Zheng was approaching Lu as a suppliant before a greater and more powerful state. The interpretation offered by the *Zuozhuan* commentary, on the other hand, suggests that Zheng is adopting such a stance for diplomatic reasons, whereas in reality its greater power allows it to dictate terms to Lu. That it should be the Mao reading that would seem to accord greater power to Lu is not, I contend, an accident. The political reality of the Spring and Autumn era was that Lu was a relatively minor and weak state, but it held a special status in the construction of Panhuaxia culture due to its origin as a fief of the celebrated Duke of Zhou, brother to King Wu and regent to King Cheng. In the ideology of later Ruist thought, its status was even greater, as the home state of Confucius and the site of his work editing the Classics, including the *Canon of Songs* and the *Spring and Autumn Annals*. A Ruist reading of a passage in the *Zuozhuan*, then, might also in some sense be a "Luist" reading, one sympathetic to the state of Lu and seeking to emphasize its power and prestige. As the give-and-take of Panhuaxia performance of the *Songs* yields to the greater rigidity of the cosmopolitan readings of the Mao school, it becomes apparent that some epichoric traditions are more equal than others.

Conclusions

It is time to take stock of the claims made by that cosmopolitan system of reading, and how well they have fared in our analysis of the anecdote. I return to the list of some of these claims I made a few pages earlier, and offer an assessment:

(a) *The reader is capable of understanding the meaning of the episode*: As we have seen, multiple interpretations of the negotiations undertaken can be reached. The gist of what is asked for and what is received is fairly clear, but all-important questions of tone, of affect, and of thought have uncertain answers.

(b) *The meaning of the episode was also transparent to its actors*: Again, there is room for some doubt here. It seems possible for such negotiations to have taken place, to the extent that the actors could have understood the broad outlines of each other's positions. There would have been much room for ambiguity, which can of course be an asset in diplomacy.

(c) *The poems themselves uncomplicatedly praise the foundational rulers of the Western Zhou and condemn their decadent successors*: This claim seems doubtful. Even the *Zuozhuan* commentaries implicitly reject this view as simplistic. To read the poems themselves as composed in the straightforward service of a Panhuaxia agenda strains plausibility, and impoverishes our understanding of what might be at stake in the negotiation.

(d) *Negotiations between states on the basis of the* Songs *can lead to shared understanding and, therefore, perhaps, to peace*: On the former point, it is not clear how much ambiguity remains for the negotiators. The *Zuozhuan* itself shows that the latter hope was a fond one.

More generally, our anecdote demonstrates the fragility of the totalizing system of interpretation offered by the Ruist tradition. Even the commentaries on the *Songs* and the *Zuozhuan* disagree sharply, because to accept the Mao interpretations of the *Songs* as operative in this *Zuozhuan* episode would be to negate the *Zuozhuan* commentaries' sense of the political situation of the time. Beyond that, our anecdote also challenges Ruist assumptions about how the shared language and behavioral practices of Panhuaxia culture might actually have worked. Certainly, this anecdote and others of its kind illustrate a world in which the *Songs* and the *Rites* may well have provided the panchoric structures within which epichoric states of the Spring and Autumn Period negotiated their affairs; as at least one critic has argued, the *Songs* (and the *Documents*) may have been virtually the *only* language shared by the Huaxia states, divided as they were by dialect.[51]

At the same time, the cosmopolitan Ruist tradition's textual focus led to a neglect of the performed and performative aspects of both *Songs* and *Rites* in the Spring and Autumn period. As the last two

[51] Nylan (2001) 84.

chapters have shown, although the *Songs* may well have acted as a shared language among the Huaxia states, the workings of that language seem to have been rather different from those envisioned by the Ruist commentaries. Rather than a stable relationship between signifying poem and signified event, which could be secured by a scene of compositional authorship, episodes like ours show that language, even proper names, deployed in a performance context need not act referentially. A given poem, especially if it operates on the axis of praise and blame, can easily be adapted to multiple performance contexts, with its meaning reauthorized in each scene. Poems can be quoted against their obvious meanings, and multiple layers of emotional or diplomatic ambiguity can be encoded within a single citation. Finally, although much of the material in circulation in the Spring and Autumn periods defined Huaxia culture with reference to an idealized Western Zhou past, that past had not yet assumed the overwhelming canonical significance it would for the Ruists a few centuries later. The *Songs* provided, not a rigid code which enforced uniform cultural values, but rather an open and flexible language, with plenty of room for ambiguity, irony, and deception, and in which cultural values, even cultural charter-myths, could be questioned.[52]

The final chapter deals with an important element of those charter-myths, namely a dance-suite supposed to represent King Wu's triumphs in founding the Western Zhou. In so doing, we will move back to the earliest compositional layers of the *Canon of Songs*, and to the heart of Eastern Zhou debates about the ownership and regulation of Huaxia culture.

[52] Here, then, is the basic problem with Jullien's reading of the anecdote (which on the whole follows the *Zuozhuan* commentary more closely than the Mao commentaries) (Jullien 76–80): he is only able to find the communicative practices of the Spring and Autumn Period restrictive by taking that (much later) Ruist narrative at face value. Reading the *Zuozhuan* at face value, by contrast, suggests a world in which at least state actors express themselves freely, even playfully.

7

The Politics of Dancing

The Great King Wu *Dance and the* Hymns of Zhou

In the final chapter, I turn to the final section of the *Songs*, the *Hymns*. The subject matter of the *Hymns*, like that of the *Court Songs*, is largely drawn from the predynastic and foundational years of the Zhou. Some of the poems constitute what one scholar has titled the *Weniad*, a quasi-epic recitation of the events of the life of King Wen;[1] others deal with events earlier or later than Wen's reign. In all cases, these narrative poems have generally received less attention in Western studies of the *Canon of Songs*, in large part perhaps because their lesser degree of strangeness from a Eurocentric perspective makes them less interesting to accounts of Otherness.

More surprising, perhaps, is that even the Mao tradition itself is by implication less interested in these poems; the poetics developed by the Preface seems clearly designed to account for the *Airs*, but accounts badly for the other poems (how, exactly, are we to imagine ritual hymns and narrative poems about charter-myths of the dynasty as the spontaneous overflowing of popular emotion?). This lack of interest in the *Court Songs* and *Hymns* may be explained by the fact that, because these texts are *explicitly* ideological in function, there is little need to construct a reading strategy that will allow one to find *implicit* political content within them. A significant section of the *Songs* seem to have been performed as quite explicitly mimetic (at least in

[1] Wang Ch'ing-hsien (1989) 73–114.

the pre-Platonic sense) dances. A (possibly spurious[2]) account in the *Zuozhuan* offers a unique account of the performance of the entire *Canon of Songs* as one performance, concluding with a series of dances:

(1) the *Dance of the Ivory Flute and Southern Pipes* 象箾南籥 (Xiangshuo Nanyue) for King Wen,
(2) the *Grand Martial Dance* 大武 (Dawu) for King Wu,
(3) the *Dance of the Rain-Dripping Eaves of Shun* 韶濩 (Shaohuo) for the sage-king Shun,
(4) the *Dance of the Great Xia* 大夏 (Daxia) for Yu, first emperor of the Xia,
(5) the *Dance of the Flutes of Shun* 韶箾 (Shaoshuo) for the sage-king Shun.

Each of these dances represents something concerning the state of affairs in an idealized early historical period in China, moving roughly backward from the early Western Zhou to the legendary emperor Shun, supposed to have preceded the Xia dynasty.[3] This historical narrative, the fundamental charter-myth of the Huaxia, is reenacted in the ritual context of the dance; the performances that Jizha attends are, moreover, clearly reenactments of reenactments in ritual of mythical narrative. In the pre-Platonic sense, then, these dances are clearly mimetic. I discuss other questions arising from

[2] For a discussion of the issues at stake, see Pines (2002) 222. Even if the episode does not authentically reflect events of the mid-sixth century, it certainly reflects Warring States Panhuaxia thinking on the role of the *Songs* as a form of cultural circulation. For the episode, see *Zuozhuan*, Xiang 29 [543 BC] p. 667.

[3] This Zhou charter-myth took shape quite late; the Yellow Emperor listed below was likely invented around 350 BC (Falkenhausen (2006) 165). The narrative begins with Three August Ones and Five Divinized Beings (三皇五帝). The Three August Ones vary between different sources, but frequently include Fuxi 伏羲, the inventor of hunting, fishing, and writing and of the trigrams of Chinese divination, Suiren 燧人, "Flint Man," the inventor of fire, and Shennong 神農, "Divine Farmer,"the inventor of agriculture. The Five August Beings are Huangdi 黃帝, the "Yellow Emperor" and founder of the lineages of the Shang and Zhou eras, Zhuanxu 顓頊, Divine Ku 帝嚳, Yao 堯, and Shun 舜. The last two were in particular paragons of virtue much cited by later philosophers as exemplars. Following disastrous floods in his reign, Shun invited Yu 禹 of Xia to control the waters and reestablish provincial governments. Shun appointed Yu as his successor, and Yu ruled as the first king of the Xia dynasty. The dynasty ruled competently through sixteen rulers, until the wicked King Jie 桀. Jie was corrupted by his concubine Mo Xi 末喜. Finally, a virtuous nobleman named Tang 湯 defeated the Xia and established the Shang dynasty.

this passage below, but for the moment, the key questions are the following: what are these dances, and what relationship do they have to the *Songs* as we know them?

This anecdote views the dances as distinct from the other four sections of the *Songs* (the *Airs*, the *Major* and *Minor Court Songs*, and the *Hymns*), because Jizha has already seen performances of each of these sections before the dances begin.[4] The Mao tradition, however, connected the *Great King Wu* dance with a series of the *Hymns of Zhou*. Both these *Hymns* and the *Great King Wu* dance should be understood as mimetic representations of the foundation myths of the Western Zhou, and in particular of the conquest of the Shang dynasty by Zhou. The *Hymns* themselves may date at least in part to that period, although their later interpretation clearly owes much to the retrospective elevation of the early Western Zhou as the charter-myth of the Panhuaxia world (in much the same way that the Trojan War was to become the Panhellenic charter-myth).

This charter-myth underwent significant evolution over the millennium between the conquest itself and the emergence of the Mao tradition. We know little of this conquest or of its central battle at Muye 牧野. The sections of the *Documents* that tell us about this battle include a known third century AD forgery, the *Completion of Battle* (Wu Cheng 武成), and other texts that are demonstrably inauthentic on linguistic grounds, such as the *Great Oath* (Tai Shi 泰誓).[5] The historian Sima Qian, in the *Basic Annals of Zhou* chapter of his *Records of the Grand Historian*, leans heavily on the *Great Oath* to present a comparatively benevolent picture of the conquest and its aftermath:

> Although King Zhouxin[6]'s army was massive, none of them had the heart to fight. In their hearts, they all wanted King Wu to enter the capital quickly. Zhouxin's army all inverted their weapons to fight (for the other side), in order to open the way for King Wu. King Wu charged, and Zhouxin's soldiers all collapsed and turned against Zhouxin. Zhouxin fled back and entered the

[4] The fact that he "sees" (*guan, jian* 觀, 見) these *Songs*, rather than "hears" them, is a useful hint that *all* of the *Songs* were thought of as incorporating movement and gesture.

[5] Shaughnessey (1997) 39.

[6] By an unfortunate coincidence, the last king of Shang (Zhou) and the dynasty that replaced him (Zhou) have names that are transcribed with the same syllable in English. Sometimes the Shang king is transcribed as Zhow to avoid confusion; I have preferred to use an alternative version of his name, Zhouxin.

capital, and climbed atop Deer Terrace. He put on his jade suit, and died by immolating himself in the fire. King Wu waved a great white banner [i.e., using the color of the Shang house, to show he came in peace] to direct the several lords. The several lords bowed to King Wu, and King Wu saluted them. The several lords followed him in. When King Wu reached the Shang capital, its citizens all welcomed him on the outskirts. King Wu thereupon caused his ministers to announce to the citizens of the capital: "Heaven above bless you all!" The people of Shang all knelt and bowed their heads twice, and King Wu bowed in reply. (transl. adapted from Cheng et al. (1994) 61)

紂師雖衆，皆無戰之心，心欲武王亟入 · 紂師皆倒兵以戰，以開武王 · 武王馳之，紂兵皆崩畔紂 · 紂走，反入登于鹿臺之上，蒙衣其殊玉，自燔于火而死 · 武王持大白旗以麾諸侯，諸侯畢拜武王，武王乃揖諸侯，諸侯畢從 · 武王至商國，商國百姓咸待於郊 · 於是武王使閎天告語商百姓曰：「上天降休！」商人皆再拜稽首，武王亦答拜。(史記 · 周本紀 124)

This benign picture of a Shang army, gentry, and citizenry greeting a merciful victor as liberators differs sharply from the one account of the Zhou conquest of Shang that seems most likely to be contemporary, the *Great Capture* (世俘) chapter of the *Remnants of Zhou Documents* (逸周書).[7] After detailing King Wu's victory over the Shang dynasty at Muye and his ritual, political, and legal activities thereafter, this text informs us of how the Shang prisoners were treated:

King Wu descended from [his] chariot and caused Scribe Yi to intone the document in the declaration to heaven. King Wu then shot the hundred evil ministers of (Shang king) Zhou. He beheaded and offered their sixty minor princes and great captains of the caldrons, and beheaded their forty family heads and captains of the caldrons. The supervisor of the infantry and supervisor of the horse first [attended] to their declaration of the suburban sacrifice; then the southern gate was flanked with the captives to be sacrificed, all of whom were given sashes and clothes to wear. The ears taken were first brought in. King Wu attended to the sacrifice and the Great Master shouldered the banner from which the head of Shang King Zhou was suspended and the red pennants with the heads of the two consorts. Then, with the first scalps, he entered and performed the burnt-offering sacrifice in the Zhou temple.[8] (Edward L. Shaughnessey, transl.)

[7] For an account of this document, see Shaughnessey (1997) 31–68. The mythology of this text identifies it as those documents Confucius chose to omit from the *Canon of Documents*, a claim clearly motivated by much later agendas.

[8] Sima Qian also has the heads of Zhouxin and his consorts suspended from banners, but, as we have seen, he emphasizes that the king (and his consorts) killed themselves.

武王降自車，乃俾史佚繇書于天號，武王乃發于紂夫惡臣百人，伐右厥六十小子鼎大師，伐厥四十夫家君鼎師，司徒、司馬初厥于郊號乃夾于南門，用俘皆施佩衣衣，先馘入，武王在祀，大師負商王紂縣首白旂，妻二首赤旗，乃以先馘入燎于周廟．(逸周書 Huang (1996) p. 218)

This is not the form of the charter-myth that later generations wanted to hear, and, because this myth was absolutely central to an ideology of benevolent rule deriving its authority from the early Zhou, the *Great Capture*'s version was generally discredited. As early as Mencius (c. 372–c. 289 BC), we hear an active rejection of this version:[9]

Mencius said: "To completely trust the *Documents* would be worse than not to have the *Documents* at all. In terms of the *Completion of Battle*, I only accept two or three bits – that's it. A humane man has no enemies in the world; the more so when the most humane man attacks the least humane man. How could 'blood have floated pestles?'" (*Mencius* 7B3)

孟子曰．盡信書．則不如無書．吾於武成．取二三策而已矣．仁人無敵於天下．以至仁伐至不仁．而何其血之流杵也．(孟子．盡心下 p. 249)

Although "the blood floated pestles" is not a line from our *Completion of Battle* text, this gruesome image certainly fits the general tenor of that document, with its descriptions of human sacrifice and, as Shaughnessey points out, deaths totaled at 177,779.[10] The stakes are high in any account of the Zhou conquest of the Shang, especially for the cosmopolitan reading of the classics (of which this Mencius passage stands as an early sign). To see King Wu as a violent and brutal man, who sacrifices his enemies to his gods and treats them harshly in defeat, threatens the entire superstructure of Ruist ideology, or at least of the sort of Ruist ideology officially favored by the end of the Western Han.[11] The *Great King Wu* dance, an important ritual manifestation of the myth of the conquest of the Shang, is therefore a touchstone of these anxieties, and interpretation of the dance an index of the health of the hermeneutic system.

9 Assuming that the version of the *Completion of Battle* chapter that Mencius knew was, in essence, the *Great Capture*. On this point, see Shaughnessey (1997) 38.

10 Shaughnessey (1997) 40.

11 As a reader helpfully points out, this episode is evidence for multiple "Ruisms," with different views of the overthrow of the Shang. Here and elsewhere, I tend to use the term "Ruist" as a shorthand for the later official line of thinking that, among other things, found the narrative of the peaceful overthrow of the Shang extremely useful. Certainly, many other strands of thought could fairly be labeled "Ruist"; I hope to have indicated those situations in which my usage might be ambiguous.

I begin by examining the poems attached to this dance, as well as the attributions themselves. The texts of the poems themselves present particular difficulties, because in several places the *Hymns* hint at the dark version of the overthrow of the Shang that the Ruists are eager to repress. Great philological ingenuity was spent on developing more irenic readings. I then examine various discussions of this dance in the classics, especially the *Rites*. Because these are seen as the very oldest of the *Songs*, and as the most authoritative Panhuaxia myths, every aspect of performance, and each performance-context, is the subject of intense cultural anxiety. This anxiety is only heightened in the cosmopolitan era of the Han, when the stakes are even higher (as we saw in Chapter 6), but the last traces of the actual music and dance associated with the *Songs* had disappeared.

The state of Lu is particularly significant in the performance, circulation, and preservation of the *Great King Wu* dance. Lu was the state in which King Wu's brother, Dan (better known as the Duke of Zhou), was established. The Duke of Zhou is represented as having served wisely as regent to his nephew, King Cheng, and is viewed as a paradigm of rulership within the Ruist tradition. The *Spring and Autumn Annals*, on which the *Zuozhuan* is supposed to be a commentary, are the court annals of Lu. Finally, Lu is the homeland of Confucius, and as a result is seen by the Ruist tradition as the locus for the transmission of the classics from the early Western Zhou to our time. In political terms, however, Lu was never one of the very largest of the states, and by the seventh to sixth century BC it had become a strictly marginal political player. To locate an event (such as a performance of the *Great King Wu* dance) in Lu, then, is to make a peculiar sort of epichoric claim, one that is at once highly localized and particular, and at the same time can lay claim to the highest level of both Panhuaxia and cosmopolitan import, especially as the site of textualization of the classics. The tension between these two poles will govern much of our reading of the *Great King Wu* dance in its cultural and historical context. Our first task, however, will be to examine the poems themselves and the philological and hermeneutic issues they raise.

As with the citharodic tradition in Greece and with the poems from the *Airs of the States* section of the *Canon of Songs*, we are unable to trace the performance history of the *Hymns of Zhou* back to its earliest stages. Their language is either very old indeed or, even worse, strongly

archaizing, presenting unique philological difficulties. Following the methodological approach we have used in earlier chapters, my focus is primarily on what these poems were *believed* to have meant in the Panhuaxia and cosmopolitan eras. In other words, I will read the testimonia concerning the *Great King Wu* dance, not as evidence for the early Western Zhou, but rather as a series of scenes of authorship that offer a reading strategy to interpret a performance tradition whose music and dance had died out, and whose very words were the subject of debate. Where there are signs of an originary meaning to the text of the *Hymns*, it is usually in those areas where the commentarial tradition is silent or fails to persuade.

The Poems of the *Great King Wu* Dance

Four of the *Hymns of Zhou* are associated with the *Great King Wu* dance. The Mao commentarial tradition identifies two hymns, *Wu* 武 and *Zhuo* 酌, with the *Great King Wu* dance, whereas the early historical narrative commentary the *Zuozhuan* connects the *Wu*, along with the *Huan* 桓 and the *Lai* 賚, to this dance.[12] There are several formal features of the *Hymns of Zhou* worthy of mention. Unlike most of the other poems in the *Songs*, the *Hymns* do not always have regular stanza length*s*, the lines are not always of equal length, and there may or may not be a regular rhyme-scheme. All of these factors have been adduced as evidence for the greater age of the *Hymns of Zhou* compared to the rest of the *Songs*; the other *Hymns* (for Shang and Lu, respectively) only share these features to a limited extent, and the rest of the collection, not at all. To some extent I am skeptical of this too-neat tendency to imagine an evolution toward greater regularity of rhyme and rhythm in the *Songs*; rarely are aesthetic evolutions so orderly, although there is some evidence that the rhymes of early Western Zhou bronze-inscriptions are less regular than even those of the *Hymns of Zhou*, which has led to speculation that our texts of the *Hymns* may have been emended at some later stage.[13] All four of

[12] Note that the Qi, Lu, and Han schools agreed with the Mao school in connecting *Wu* and *Zhuo*, but not *Huan* and *Lai*, with the dance (Wang (1987) 1034, 1055, 1057, 1058 respectively). I leave the titles of the *Hymns* untranslated, because many of the titles remain obscure.

[13] Nylan (2001) 82.

the poems discussed in this study contain a number of philological and hermeneutic problems. I present a discussion of these problems below; philological discussions are in italics to facilitate skimming by nonspecialists, and I summarize important points in normal type thereafter, before moving to interpretive issues.

武 Wu *(Song 285; p. 737)*

> Oh, great you are, King Wu! Nothing is strong but in your efforts!
> Truly *wen*[14] is King Wen! Able to open the way for his heirs!
> Wu the inheritor received this, defeating and exterminating Yin.
> You brought about and established your merit.
>
> 於皇武王, 無競維烈．允文文王, 克開厥後．
> 嗣武受之, 勝殷遏劉, 耆定爾功．

Several characters in the poem, and particularly in the last two lines, elude interpretation. In the final line, the character zhi 耆*, which today can mean "to bring about," is glossed in the main Mao school as equivalent to* zhi 致*, or "send, result in." The subcommentary of Lu Deming, in contrast, interprets the character as equivalent to* lao 老*, or "old," another meaning appropriate to the character in later times, although in that case it would now be pronounced* qi*. To add to the confusion, the commentaries offer an alternative reading of* e 惡*, which might in context either be an interjection or have the meaning "fiercely." The third character in the same line could be, as the eighteenth-century Qing philologist Dai Zhen suggests, a demonstrative pronoun,*[15] *but the Lu tradition preserves an alternative reading* wu 武*, both the name of King Wu and the word for martial virtue. We are faced, then, not only with the uncertain poetics of deixis we have already encountered in other chapters, but also with additional doubts about whether there is any deixis here at all, or whether in fact we are dealing with either a proper name or an adjective. The line, then, may, in its various readings, mean any of the following (or, of course, some combination thereof): "You brought about and established your merit," "Oh! you establish your merit," "Fiercely you establish your merit," "In old age you establish your merit," "You brought about and*

[14] *Wen* is a problematic term in all early poetry, and especially in this context. The term originally seems to refer to the attributes of an ancestor, gradually acquiring connotations of ornamentation, writing, civil (as opposed to martial) virtues, and ritual deportment. It is also, of course, the posthumous name of King Wen.

[15] Dai (in Yu ed. (1986)) 98.

established your martial merit," "You brought about and established the merit of King Wu."

The translation of the preceding line is entirely dependent on the reading chosen for e, 遏. *Zhu Xi, following the Mao school, reads this character as equivalent to* zhi 止, *"stop," and takes the line as a whole as meaning "He conquered Yin and* put a stop to its killing. "[16] *The eighteenth-century philologist Ma Ruichen (followed by Karlgren), drawing on parallel passages in the* Guoyu *and the* Zuozhuan, *sees it rather as equivalent to* jue 絕 *or* mie 滅, *"cut off or extinguish."*[17] *On this reading, the line as a whole would mean, "He conquered Yin and* exterminated them, *" the translation I have offered above.*

The next to last line of this poem, then, means either "He conquered Yin [Shang] and put a stop to its killing," or "He conquered Yin and exterminated them." The former reading, which comes from the Mao school, fits the Ruist assumption that the conquest of Shang was benevolent, whereas the latter reading, more plausible linguistically, better fits the *Great Capture* version. Given the position of King Wu within the charter-myths of the Western Zhou, the question here is of more than philological importance. The problem is all the more acute within the cosmopolitan era of the early Han, during which our commentaries emerge: the Ruists, advocating a state ideology of gentleness they contrasted to the harsh Legalist rule of the Qin, were especially keen to see in King Wu a paradigm of kingly generosity toward the vanquished, rather than a bloodthirsty warrior-king, bent on eradicating his enemies. As we have seen, the Panhuaxia readings of the Eastern Zhou era, as seen at least in the *Zuozhuan*, leave open at least the possibility of a darker reading of the early Western Zhou; for the Ruists of the Han era, such a reading became unthinkable. It

[16] Zhu (rprt 1980) 231.

[17] Ma *juan* 30 p. 818; Karlgren (1946) 159. Both readings for 遏 are common in glosses on the *Canon of Songs*. For example, in the *Major Court Songs*, in the poem *The People Are Wearied* (*Songs* 253, 民勞; p. 630), the line 式遏寇虐 is understood as meaning "In order to put a stop to thieves and oppressors," *King Wen* (*Songs* 235, 文王; p. 531), the line 無遏爾躬 is read as "do not extinguish your own life." In these cases, the two meanings overlap; with our *Song* poem, the will have precisely opposite meanings. It is striking that in *King Wen*, where it is part of a warning directed at Wen's descendants, the tradition is happier with the meaning "exterminate/extinguish" than it is with the *Wu*, where that meaning reflect badly on King Wu.

is not surprising that the Mao commentaries favored the first reading, difficult to justify linguistically, but preserving the virtue of King Wu.

For a poem that ostensibly praises King Wu, at least as much emphasis is placed on King Wen, of whom it is said, as on Wu himself.[18] Throughout there is an emphasis on inheritance and succession – the praise of King Wen stresses the way his efforts were to bear fruit under Wu, whereas Wu's own success is clearly and directly attributed to his "inheritance" from his father. The emphasis in this poem is as much on the orderly and proper succession from one legitimate monarch to another as it is on the merits of King Wu in particular. Where we saw the Greek tradition interested in establishing a genealogy of musical *performance*, here this is projected onto a genealogy of musical and ritual *reference*. The processes are analogous – just as a political heir increases the legitimacy of his own rule by praising his ancestors, so a poetic tradition establishes its own canonicity through its connection to prestigious antecedents. In both cases, the structures of interpretation are more important than the interpreted elements.

Readings of the poem and of the dance as a whole generally depend on (and in turn reinforce) the scene of authorship imagined and we find three possibilities given for this poem. The *Abundant Dew of the Spring and Autumn Annals* 春秋繁露 (Chunqiu Fanlu), traditionally attributed to the Han Confucian scholar and philosopher Dong Zhongshu,[19] claims that the "Wu music" was written by King Wen in order to worship Heaven.[20] The Lu, Qi, and Han schools likewise attribute the writing of the poem to King Wen,[21] enjoining his son to emulate his own example. The Mao school and Zhu Xi attribute the poem to the Duke of Zhou,[22] presumably urging his nephew, King Cheng, to follow his father Wu's example (and by extension that of his grandfather, King Wen). A variation on the latter version is proposed by the Warring-States era philosophical text the *Lüshi Chunqiu*,

[18] On this point, see Owen (2001).

[19] Traditionally seen as the key figure in installing Ruist ideology at the Han court. The text itself is subject to numerous difficulties of attribution and dating; see, for example, Queen (1996). Because my interest here is merely in the range of interpretations offered for the dance, I will not dwell here on the possible dating and authenticity of this passage.

[20] *Chunqiu fanlu* 23 p. 187.

[21] Wang (rprt. 1987) 1034.

[22] *Shi Jing* (737). Zhu (rprt 1980) 231.

which claims that King Wu commissioned the work from the Duke of Zhou.[23]

The most popular attribution is to the Duke of Zhou, but each of these scenes of authorship shifts the meaning of the poem. If the poem is by King Wu himself, then the scenario becomes analogous to (for example) Greek myths in which a god initiates a sacrifice that will be perpetuated by humans. If the poem is by Wu's father Wen, then the implicit focus on Wen's own virtue is brought out, and Wu is understood primarily in his role as able successor to Wen. If the author is the Duke of Zhou, then Wu's status as a successor is secondary to his innate virtues, but the general theme of the generational continuity of virtue assumes a new importance in light of the injunction to the young King Cheng. As we shall see below, especially in a passage from the *Offices of Zhou*, the *Great King Wu* dance can serve as an educational tool for the enlightenment of princes in general. The mythical narrative implicit in the poem is the canonical element of the ritual, whereas its pedagogical function in later courts is the self-referential element; *mimêsis*, as in Greece, is as much didactic as it is ritualistic.

酌 Zhuo *(Song 293; p. 752)*

Oh, fine is the King's Army! Following [the circumstances], he nourished them when times were dark.
Then the times became bright, and they were a great assistance.
We have been favored and received him. Martial were the king's deeds.
You have had an inheritance. This is your work – it is truly an army.

於鑠王師, 遵養時晦・時純熙矣, 是用大介・
我龍受之, 蹻蹻王之造・載用有嗣, 實維爾公允師・

This song is among the most obscure in the entire Canon of Songs *corpus, and the glosses vary widely. The greatest crux in the poem comes with the second and third lines,* 遵養時晦, 時純熙矣. *The main Mao commentary glosses* zun 遵 *as* shuai 率 *("lead troops"),* yang 養 *as* qu 取 *("take"), and* hui 晦 *as* mei 昧 *("dark, obscure"). On this basis, the second line would translate as "He led [his troops] and took this dark [one]"; that is, King Wu marshaled his troops*

[23] *Lüshi chunqiu* 仲夏部 古樂 p. 120; see also Wang (rprt. 1987) 1034.

to capture King Zhou 紂*, the notorious last ruler of the Shang dynasty. The commentary does not discuss the following line, but the subcommentary (the* Zhengjian*) glosses* chun 純 *as* da 大 *("great") and* xi 熙 *as* xing 興 *("arouse, set in motion"). The third line would then read, "This great action!"*

This interpretation is clearly wrong in at least one of its particulars: as Karlgren carefully shows, yang 養 *cannot possibly have meant "take, capture." A variety of other interpretations have been put forward, each with its own complications. Zhu Xi reads* zun 遵 *as* xun 循 *("follow, [here] as of circumstances") and takes* shi 時 *in its primary meaning of "time" rather than as a substitute for the demonstrative* shi 是*, thus reading the two lines, "Following [the circumstances], when times were dark he reared the army, and when times were bright he . . . ."*[24] *Karlgren follows this reading in most respects, but takes* shi *as a demonstrative, offering the translation, "according as he reared it, it was [first] obscure, and then it became greatly bright."*[25] *In my translation, I have followed Zhu Xi, but none of the readings inspires much certainty.*

The yong 用 *of the fourth line is likely to be interpreted either as a particle or as equivalent to* yi 以*, "therefore," with the initial* shi 是 *functioning as a demonstrative.*[26] *As for the* jie 介*, various interpretations have been proposed. The Mao school glosses this character as* zhu 助*, "aid, assist," and I have chosen to follow that reading here. Karlgren translates the line as "therefore it became very great."*[27] *Legge, operating seemingly on his own initiative, glosses* jie 介 *with* jia 甲*, "armor," reading the line as "he thereupon donned his grand armor."*

The problem in the fifth line lies with the character long 龍*, normally "dragon." Here that meaning is clearly impossible; I have followed the Mao school here in reading* long 龍 *as equivalent to* chong 寵*, which means to favor or show patronage toward someone. Ma Ruichen, in contrast, reads* long 龍 *as equivalent to* kan 龕*, which he in turn glosses as equivalent*

[24] Zhu 235. The third line of the poem is then a subordinate clause dependent upon the fourth line, so it will be necessary to unravel that line before being able to complete a translation based upon Zhu Xi's gloss.

[25] Karlgren (1946) 169.

[26] The fact that *shi* 是 is here used as a demonstrative might make less likely, but cannot rule out, the possibility that *shi* 時 is used in its place in the preceding line.

[27] Karlgren (1946) 169. Notice that in the *The Many Regions* passage from the *Documents* quoted below, Karlgren himself translates *jie* 介 as "help."

to shou 受*, meaning to receive, and thus he takes* 龍受 *as being essentially redundant.*[28]

In the sixth line, zao 造*, which in modern terms means "create," presents its own problems. The Zheng Xuan orthodox commentary on the Mao school here reads the character as meaning "hasten," in which case the line will read something like, "Martial were those who hastened to the king." Karlgren characterizes this reading as "comic,"*[29] *preferring to read, with the earlier strand of the Mao school,* zao 造 *as equivalent to* wei 為*, a character that can represent either the verb "do, make" or, in a different tone, its nominalization.*

In my translation of the final line, I mostly follow Karlgren, who translates it as "This through your work is truly an army!" The Mao school, however, as expressed to us through Zheng Xuan, explains the line through the periphrasis 實維汝之事信得用師之道*, "In your management you truly attain to the principles of using the army."*[30] *Zhu Xi takes* shi 師 *in the sense of "take as a master," certainly a legitimate use of the character, but one at odds with its meaning ("army") earlier in the poem. His reading of the line as a whole would then translate as "Your management of the troops we should emulate [i.e., taking you as our master]."*

In order to render the fruits of the above discussion lucid for the nonspecialist, I offer a series of translations, attempting with each to remain in the spirit of one or another commentator. A translation faithful to the Mao school would read something like this:

> Oh, fine is the king's army! He led [it] and took that dark one.
> What a great action! Thereby he gave great assistance.
> We have harmoniously received it. Martial were the king's deeds.
> Indeed in managing your troops you truly attain martial principles.

Zhu Xi's interpretation of the poem would yield something like the following:

> Oh, fine is the king's army! Following the circumstances, he nurtured the army in dark times;
> When times were bright, he gave great assistance.
> We have harmoniously received it. Martial were the king's deeds.
> We should emulate your management of the troops.

[28] Ma *juan* 30 p. 830.
[29] Karlgren (1946) 169.
[30] Karlgren (1946) 169 characterizes this reading as "forced."

Karlgren offers the following translation, based on his glosses:

> Oh, fine is the king's army! According as he reared it, it was first obscure,
> And then it became greatly bright; therefore it became very great.
> We have been favored and received it. Martial were the king's deeds.
> This through your work is truly an army!

As with the previous poem, all agree to the general extent that the poem offers praise for the army of King Wu. There are, however, significant differences in mood and detail among the three. The Mao commentary specifically links the poem to the capture of King Zhouxin, the paradigmatically wicked last ruler of the Shang dynasty, something that requires a fairly brutal misreading of the character *yang* 養, which generally means "nurture," but which the Mao school takes as "capture." Without this reading, the entire Mao emphasis on the capture of King Zhouxin collapses, and the poem becomes about Wu's skill in developing a strong army, even before the period of his victories. All three interpretations are focalized within the present of the ritual itself, but where Mao and Karlgren read the poem as straightforward praise for King Wu, Zhu Xi's interpretation shifts the last line from further praise of Wu to an injunction to the present day, significantly altering the self-referential message of the ritual.

The implausible Mao interpretation seems motivated by a deeper version of the sort of mutually constitutive poem–anecdote systems we saw in readings of the *Zuozhuan* in Chapter 5. The Mao glosses for these lines, at least in the subcommentary, draw on a citation of this poem in the *Zuozhuan*, in a speech claimed to have been given by Shi Hui 士會, one of the military commanders of the Jin army in a campaign to aid Zheng in its struggle with Chu in 596 BC. Before the army was able to reach Zheng, they received a report that that state had made a treaty with Chu, and the commanders of the Jin army debated the best course of action.[31] They decided to attack Chu, resulting in a humiliating defeat for Jin, but Shi Hui counseled the return of the army home without fighting, arguing that Chu was too well-governed to make a viable target:

> Seeing a possibility and advancing, and recognizing a difficulty and withdrawing – this is the skilled administration of an army. To annex the weak [states]

[31] See Chapter 6 for a fuller discussion of the general political background here.

and to attack the blind, this is the skilled management of martial affairs. For the time being, organize your army and manage martial affairs in this way. There are other weak and blind [states], why is it necessary [to attack] Chu? Zhong Hui[32] says, "Capture the disordered [states], humiliate those that are collapsing and annex the weak." The *Zhuo* says, "Oh, fine is the king's army! He led [his troops] and captured this dark one." This is using force against the blind.

見可而進, 知難而退, 軍之善政也 · 兼弱攻昧, 武之善經也 · 子姑整軍而經武乎 · 猶有弱而昧者, 何必楚? 仲虺有言曰: 取亂侮亡兼弱也 · 汋曰: 於鑠王師遵養時晦, 耆昧也 · (*Zuozhuan* Xuan 12 [596 BC] p. 391)

The use of this quotation in the speech delivered by Shi Hui is intended to bolster his argument that military force should be used against the weak and not against the strong, but for the Mao commentarial tradition, it is Shi Hui's speech that provides much needed confirmation of the reading of the lines from the hymn *Zhuo*. The philological implausibility of the Mao reading allows us to see still more clearly the construction of the classics within the commentarial tradition as a totalizing ideological system, even when interpretation of the text must be outrageously forced.

The meaning of the title *Zhuo* 酌 is itself contested. Zhu Xi notes that this poem, along with two of the three that follow it, is among the few in the corpus whose titles are characters not found within the poem itself.[33] The relationship of the title word, which can mean either "pour wine" or "consider," to the text of the poem is similarly uncertain. Finally, the character 酌 used in the title is sometimes seen in the forms 汋 and 勺.[34] The tradition is unanimous in reading the title as "consider" – the Lu and Qi schools follow closely the Mao school's comment 告成大武也 · 言能酌先祖之道以養天下也 · ("[The *Zhuo*] announces the completion of the *Great King Wu* dance. It says that he is able to consider the Way of the former ancestors in order to nourish all under

[32] In the *Canon of Documents* chapter titled "The Announcement of Zhong Hui" 仲虺之誥 (p. 111). The purported context of the speech is the overthrow of the Xia dynasty by the Shang, reinforcing the contrast between the situation Shi Hui believes Jin to be in and a moment of legitimate transfer of rule also suggested by the quotation from *Zhuo*.

[33] He suggests, quite plausibly, that these titles are in fact something like tune titles.

[34] For example, in the *Zuozhuan* we find 汋 (Duke Xuan 12 [596 BC] p. 331), and in the first century AD *History of the Han* (漢書)'s "Treatise on Music and Rites" 禮樂志 we find 勺 (p. 1038).

heaven."[35]) Note however that 酌 *never* has this meaning within the *Canon of Songs*. Rather, it always has the primary meaning of "pour."[36] This is not to say that the title must have that meaning, but if the title does mean "to consider", then it most likely postdates the poem itself. Given the ritual context of the poem, the title might easily suggest that some form of libation was performed while the song was sung.[37]

The authorship of this poem is also disputed. Most interpreters give the entire *Great King Wu* dance a single author, but some have identified the *Zhuo* as written by another. The Qi and Lu schools both connect the *Great King Wu* either with the Zhou as a whole or with King Wu, whereas the *Zhuo* is associated with the Duke of Zhou alone.[38] As with the previous poem, attribution to the Duke of Zhou underscores the role the poem should play as a "mirror for princes," an edifying ritual in which the greatness of past rulers was offered as a model for future rulers (a possibility also suggested by Zhu Xi's reading of the poem). For those who followed this reading the *Great King Wu* dance also contained within itself a dynastic succession of sorts between the poems by King Wu and that by his brother the Duke of Zhou. This would then mirror the concern with succession that is a feature of all these poems, a concern made explicit in this poem by the line 載用有嗣, which I have translated as "You have had an inheritance."

桓 Huan *(Song 294; p. 753)*

The myriad kingdoms are at peace; multiple years have had good harvests.
Heaven's Command has not wearied.
Martial, martial is King Wu; he protected and held his officers.
He used them in all regions, and was successful in establishing his house.

[35] Our testimonia for the Lu tradition states 告成大武也. 言能酌先祖之所敬也. (i.e. that the concern is directed toward what was reverenced by the ancestors), whereas the Qi tradition states 周公作勺. 勺, 言能勺先祖之道也. ("The Duke of Zhou created the *Shuo* (sic). The *Shuo* says that he can heed the way of the former ancestors") (Wang (rprt. 1987) 1055). In each case, 酌, read as meaning "consider," could plausibly mean "pour a libation to." Although the Mao school insists on *yang* 養 meaning "capture" in the text of the poem, it itself uses the more normal meaning of "nourish" here.

[36] One use in the *Airs* (Poem 3), four in the *Minor Court Songs* (180, 220, 223, 231), and three in the *Major Court Songs* (246, 250, 251).

[37] Chow (1986) 225 suggests that the title may refer to a ritual in which a ladle *shao* 勺 is proffered; for the previous *Hymn*, *Wu*, he argues that the objects displayed are a shield and sword and, for the final of our four *Hymns*, *Lai*, he suggests a shell.

[38] See Wang (rprt. 1987) 1055.

He was glorious in the eyes of heaven,
In august manner he came to the succession.

綏萬邦, 婁豐年 · 天命匪解 ·
桓桓武王, 保有厥士 ·
于以四方, 克定厥家 ·
於昭于天, 皇以閒之 ·

There are fewer problems with the text of this poem than with that of the previous poem. Ma Ruichen reads tu 土*, "earth" in the fourth line for* shi 士*, "scholar/officer/gentleman," partly in order to ensure a rhyme. There is abundant evidence from this and other poems that the* Song *did not and need not rhyme, and Ma's emendation seems implausible. The line would then read, "He protected and held his land." Additionally, the Mao commentarial tradition glosses* shi 士 *as* shi 事 *"affair, business," leading to a translation, "He was able to hold in safety affairs of the state."*

Ma Ruichen also glosses xian 閒 *in the final line as* dai 代*, in the sense of "represent."*[39] *The line then becomes "[Heaven] made him august in order that he might represent [heaven on earth]," a reading that would enhance the emphasis on the legitimacy of the dynasty. I have instead followed Karlgren; his reading places greater stress on the smoothness of its succession.*[40] *The title* Huan 桓 *presents some difficulties. The Mao school glosses the title as it does in the fourth line, as "mighty, martial." Ma Ruichen speculates that this title is equivalent to* he 和*, "harmony." Chow Tse-tsung, who interprets all the* Great King Wu *poems as "object-display ritual dances," interprets this title to mean that a square wooden block is the object displayed in this part of the dance.*[41]

The few philological issues with this poem do not substantially affect its meaning; the more controversial question is whether it was part of the *Great King Wu*. A passage from the *Zuozhuan*, which we will examine later, suggests as much, but the Mao school, supported in this case by the Lu tradition, offers a different interpretation. The Mao school offers another reading: "The *Huan* is for announcing war and for sacrificing to the god of war. The *Huan* expresses the intent of King Wu [or martial intent]" 桓, 講武類禡也桓武志也. A reading of the

[39] Ma *juan* 30 p. 831.
[40] Karlgren (1946) 171.
[41] Chow (1986) 225.

poem that emphasizes King Wu's military might will make the Mao reading seem the more appropriate; one that stresses instead the first two lines about the "peace dividend" enjoyed by the Zhou lands after Wu's victory might suggest instead a connection with the *Great King Wu*. In the *Zuozhuan* passage I discuss below, we shall see how just such a reading makes use of the *Huan*.

賚 Lai *(Song 295; p. 754)*

King Wen labored mightily, and we have received [benefit] from him.
He spread that abundance everywhere; from now on, we will seek to settle the kingdom.
This is the Command of Zhou; oh, it is abundant.

文王既勤止, 我應受之 ·
敷時繹思, 我徂維求定 ·
時周之命, 於繹思 ·

The meaning of the character yi 繹*, found in the third and sixth lines, is unclear. Mao glosses the character as* chen 陳*, "spread out, display," and the* Zhengjian *paraphrases the line to read* 敷是文王之勞心能陳繹而行之*, "He displayed this, the labor of King Wen, and was able to expand it and execute it." This reading seems to rely upon reading the* si 思 *at the end of each line as "to think," rather than as a particle. In the sixth line, the* Zhengjian *paraphrases* 於女諸臣受封者陳繹而思行之以文王之功業*, "Oh, you enfeoffed ministers, expand and think of executing the results of the labors of King Wen." This reading involves many difficulties. As with the third line, it involves an unusual gloss for* yi *and an unlikely use of* si *as a full verb with an implied complementary verb in verse-final position. Zhu Xi proposed glossing* yi 繹 *as* xunyi 尋繹*, "investigate."*[42] *On this reading, the third line would read, "He spread out [his labors], investigated and thought about them," whereas the sixth and final line would mean, "Oh, investigate and think about [the command of Zhou]." Ma Ruichen takes the two* si 思 *as particles rather than verbs, but otherwise follows Zhu Xi.*[43] *Karlgren follows the Han school gloss of* yi 繹 *as "ampleness, abundance," leading to the translation I adopt here.*[44]

[42] Zhu (rprt. 1980) 236.
[43] Ma *juan* 30 p. 831.
[44] Karlgren (1946) 172.

The meaning of our poem is again ambiguous, and again we find that the earlier reading emphasizes the obligation of Wen's successors to uphold his standards, whereas the later reading stresses the greatness of his achievements. In particular, the Mao reading takes the last line as an injunction to later officials to use the achievements of King Wen as their mirror, whereas a twentieth-century reading, more philologically plausible than its predecessors, makes the line instead a reflection on King Wen's successes. It is again unclear whether this poem is in fact part of the *Great King Wu* dance. A *Zuozhuan* passage quoted later in the chapter implies that it is, whereas the Mao preface says, "*Lai* is the ceremony of the great enfeoffment in the temple. 'Lai' means to give, referring to that which [Wu] gave to good men." (賚．大封於廟也．賚．予也. 言所以錫予善人也.) We can see that this interpretation of the whole poem, offered in the Mao preface, conditions the reading of individual lines and characters – the assumption that the poem depicts a ceremony of enfeoffment enables the Mao school to focalize the implied audience of the poem, and, thereby, to determine the intended message. In particular, the Mao school's problematic readings of the third and sixth lines suggest a philological interpretation driven by the imagined ritual context, and not *vice versa*.

Like *Zhuo*, this is one of the few poems in the *Canon of Songs* that have titles that are not contained within the text itself. The Mao preface equates *lai* 賚 with *yu* 予, "give," suggesting a ceremony of enfeoffment. This is the sense the character is usually given, but some caution is necessary. The word is found forty-seven times in the text of the thirteen classics, but, revealingly, most of these uses are found in the commentaries and subcommentaries, in the discussion of this poem in the *Zuozhuan*, or in sections of the *Shujing* long known to have been late (possibly post-Han) forgeries. In other words, most of these examples are derivative levels of the text of the classics, composed by people who knew the Mao school's gloss of this poem. Apart from this poem itself, there remain eight relevant passages,[45] and the general sense of those passages suggests that the title is at least as likely to refer

45 Aside from the passages I discuss, there is one reference in the *Lunyu* and two in the *Erya*, the proto-dictionary/thesaurus organized on the basis of chains of synonyms. None of these references adds substantially to our understanding of the use of the word as the title of our song.

to a ceremony of ancestor-worship as to a ceremony of enfeoffment, a solution that better matches the language of the poem.

The two occasions on which the character is used in the *Canon of Songs* other than in the title of this poem both refer to ritual contexts, but also to "giving" understood more literally of an object or a message rather than of a title. The first is found in the *Minor Court Songs* section, in the poem *Thick the Thorny Bushes* 楚茨 (*Songs* 209; p. 453), in the context of a sacrifice performed in an ancestral temple: 工祝致告, 徂賚孝孫. "The skilled blesser presents the message, and immediately conveys it to the filial descendants." The other use is found in the *Hymns of Shang*, whose dating is itself problematic,[46] in the poem *Exemplary Ancestor* 烈祖 (*Songs* 302; p. 791), also a poem understood as performed at a ritual in an ancestral temple: 既載清酤, 賚我思成, "The clear liquors are there, and give us completion of our thoughts."

There are three possibly early references in the *Documents*. These uses do refer specifically to gifts or rewards bestowed upon subjects by rulers, but not always in the context of enfeoffment. In *The Many Regions* (Duo Fang 多方), the Duke of Zhou urges the people of Yin (i.e., the survivors of the Shang Dynasty) to submit to the new Zhou dynasty, remarking that in exchange "We, the lords of Zhou, will greatly help and reward you" 我有周惟其大介賚爾 (p. 259). In the *Charge to Marquis Wen* (Wen Hou Zhi Ming, 文侯之命) King Ping 周平王 (r. 770–720 BC) offers rewards to a lord from Jin:

> I therefore give you one *you*-vessel of black-millet liquor, one red bow, 100 red arrows, one black bow, 100 black arrows, and a four-team of horses.[47]
>
> 用賚爾秬 鬯一卣・彤弓一・彤矢百・盧弓一・盧矢百・馬四匹・(尚書 文侯之命 p. 331)

In a third passage in the *Speech at the Battle of Bi* (Bi shi 費誓) section, set on the verge of a battle with the Yi and Rong peoples of the

[46] The prevailing view on the *Shang Hymns* in ancient times was that they had been composed in the reign of King Tang at the start of the Shang for his descendants. A minority view, now generally accepted, claimed that they had been written down in the Spring and Autumn period, and may have been modeled (as, likely, were the *Lu Hymns*) on the *Zhou Hymns* (Nylan (2001) 86–7).

[47] In the *Documents*, *yu* 予 can function as an equivalent to *lai* in ritual contexts. See, for example, the passage in the *Luo Gao* 洛誥 section reading "To give [them] two *you*-vessels of black-millet liquor, this is called the *Ming Yin* sacrifice". 予以秬鬯二卣,曰明禋 p. 230.

frontier, possibly in 643 BC (and thus late in the notional history of the *Documents*),[48] the ruler exhorts his soldiers not to waste time chasing after escaped slaves and livestock:

When horses or oxen run around in heat, or when slaves, male or female, abscond, do not dare go away and pursue them, but if you report the matter, I will reward you.[49]

馬牛其風・臣妻逋逃・勿敢越逐・祇復之・我商賚汝・(尚書 費誓p. 312)

These uses of the character *lai* 賚 do not provide a coherent picture of its meaning in the early Zhou era. Although *lai* can indeed be used of rewards offered to subjects, we can see that it is used in a variety of contexts not limited to enfeoffment. The language of enfeoffment and that of gift-giving are equivalent, with enfeoffment metonymically represented by the presentation of gifts from ruler to subject, as we see in the passage from the *Wen hou zhi ming* section of the *Shang shu* above. Furthermore, our examples from the *Canon of Songs* suggest that the term may also be found in the context of sacrificial offerings to ancestors, so that *lai* will mean both "bestow titles and honors upon subjects as a reward for their services" and "bestow sacrifices upon ancestors to thank them for services rendered." In both cases, the idea of reciprocal exchange involving the ruler is central, but the interpretation adopted will affect the ritual context with which it is associated. There is no unambiguously correct philological interpretation, but rather a series of possibilities – and the decision on which interpretation to take is likely to be based on the interpreter's own vision of the significance of this poem.

The Mao school generally reads the texts of the poems as a sort of "mirror to princes," miming the worthy actions of dynastic ancestors on the canonical level in order to spur a young ruler to action on the self-referential level. The Mao readings also frequently distort the natural meaning of a line in order to efface any suggestion of ambiguous behavior on the part of the early Western Zhou rulers. As others have argued, the retrospective imagination of the early Western Zhou is demonstrably wrong in many respects, and, when wrong,

[48] Qu (1984) 173.

[49] I follow Qu's translation of the next to last phrase of this passage in preference to that of Karlgren, who would translate, "but if you respectfully return them."

invariably represents that period as more stable and more centralized than it actually was.[50] The Mao reading of these poems is consistent with this tendency, intensified as it was by the political agendas of the cosmopolitan era.

The hint offered by the title of our final piece, the *Lai*, is also suggestive. If the Mao school is right, and the poem is about an enfeoffment ceremony, then perhaps the poems of the *Great King Wu* dance were themselves part of the gift bestowed on a regional ruler. If so, a performance of that dance in the epichoric context of a regional court would be not only permissible, but in fact essential to the ideology of Zhou unity. If, on the other hand, the poem refers to a ceremony of ancestor worship, the suggestion is strongly that the poem (and perhaps the dance as a whole) is to be performed only at the central royal Zhou court,[51] and any performance elsewhere is potentially both sacrilegious and an overt challenge to the political order. In other words, a Ruist reading must not only downplay any suggestion of King Wu's cruelty toward his enemies, but also work out who gets to use the dance, and for what purposes. A great deal turns out to be at stake in these discussions; as with the scene of authorship of Stesichorus' *Palinode*, we can see that different scenes of authorship with respect to this dance have very different implications for the relationship between epichoric and Panhuaxia values, expressed in both cases through debates about the details of a charter-myth.

Arguing about the Dance: The *Great King Wu* Dance in Early Texts

There are two broad categories of discussion of the *Hymns* in connection with the *Great King Wu* dance. Some texts are concerned with the function of the dance, whether for moral instruction, sacrificial ritual, or *mimêsis* of the triumphs of King Wu, and whether in terms of the canonical meaning of the ritual, or its self-referential value in contemporary debate. Other discussions debate the propriety of the dance's performance in an epichoric context, especially (for reasons

[50] Especially useful here is Wang (1999) 244–6.

[51] See, e.g., Falkenhausen (2006) 66, on the responsibility of the senior branch of a lineage (such as the Zhou royal house for the Ji clan) for sacrifices to the shared lineage ancestors for all branches.

we have already discussed) at the Lu regional court. Most, though not all, of our readings will be found in the *Record of Rites* and the *Zuozhuan*, and we shall see that the same "text" (remembering the sedimented nature of all the classics) is quite capable of presenting diametrically opposed perspectives. These accounts also differ on various details of the performance of the *Great King Wu* dance. Although this is to be expected, given the nature of the *Record of Rites* and the *Zuozhuan*, it does not inspire us with confidence about any of these interpretations.[52] A closer examination of the readings these texts provide will add little to our understanding of the poems, but will enable us to see more clearly how the various writers of the *Zuozhuan* and the *Record of Rites* thought they worked.

One chapter of the *Record of Rites* known as the *Record of Music*, or *Yue Ji* 樂記, deals with the dance in mimetic terms, where most other discussions do not. This passage is also found in the *Music Treatise* (Yue Shu, 樂書) chapter of Sima Qian's *Records of the Grand Historian* (Shi Ji, 史記) and thus must be no later than the Western Han in origin. The text stages a discussion of the dance that includes Confucius:

Binmou Jia[53] was sitting in attendance on Confucius. Confucius spoke with him concerning music, and said, "As for the Wu dance, the preparatory warning is long. Why is that?" The reply was "He was anxious that he would not attain control of his masses." "They sigh and sing, and the sound is prolonged. Why is that?" The reply was "He feared that they would miss the [military] engagement." "The raising of arms, stomping of feet, and sudden martial appearance happen very early. Why is that?" "The reply was "The time for action had been reached." "The sitting position in the Wu dance has the left knee up and the right knee down. Why is that?" The reply was "That is not the sitting position in the Wu dance." "The music is licentious and covetous of Shang. Why is that?" The reply was "That is not the sound of the Wu dance."

The Master asked, "If it is not the sound of the Wu dance, what sound is it?" The reply was "Those in charge [of the music] lost the tradition. If they did not lose the tradition, then the intent of King Wu was wrong." The Master said, "Yes, what I had heard this from Zhang Hong is what you are saying."

Binmou Jia rose, left his mat, and spoke to Confucius, saying, "As for the long preparatory warning of the drum, I have already heard your rule. May I ask

[52] See *ECTBG* for a fuller discussion, and now the relevant chapters in Nylan (2001).
[53] Unknown except for the two occurrences of this passage.

why it continues, and, in continuing, is long? How is that?" The Master replied, "Sit down, and I'll tell you. Music is an image of what has been accomplished. They grasp their shields, standing like mountains. This is King Wu's stance. The raising of arms, stomping of feet, and sudden martial appearance are the intent of Duke Tai. In the Wu Dance, their being out of order and all sitting represents the government of the Dukes of Zhou and Zhao."

"In the Wu dance they begin by moving to the north mountain. In the second part, they extinguish Shang. In the third, they return to the south. In the fourth, they mark the boundaries of the Southern states. In the fifth, the Duke of Zhou is assigned to the left and the Duke of Shao to the right. In the sixth, they return to where they started and offer sacrifice. The king and general stand on either side of the dancers and shake bells to provide the rhythm. Four times (or in teams of four) they attack. This shows the abundant awe for King Wu in the Middle Kingdoms. They advance in between in military formation. This shows eagerness to complete the task. Standing long where they started shows the waiting for the arrival of the lords . . . .[54] In this manner, the way of Zhou was spread in all four directions, and rites and music were properly intermixed. Therefore, how could the long continuation of the Wu dance not be appropriate?"

賓牟賈侍坐於孔子・孔子與之言及樂・曰・夫武之備戒之已久・何也・對曰・病不得其眾也・詠歎之・淫液之・何也・對曰・恐不逮事也・發揚蹈厲之已蚤・何也・對曰・及時事也・武坐致右憲左・何也・對曰・非武坐也・聲淫及商・何也・對曰・非武音也・子曰・若 非武音・則何音也・對曰・有司失其傳也・若非有司失其傳・則武王之志荒矣・子曰・唯・丘之聞諸萇弘・亦若吾子之言是也・賓牟賈起・免席而請曰・夫武之備戒之已久・則既聞命矣・敢問遲之遲而 又久・何也子曰・居・吾語汝・夫樂者・象成者也・摠干而山立・武王之事也・發揚蹈厲・大公之志也・武亂皆坐・周召之治也・且夫武始而北山・再成而滅商・三成而南・四成而南國是疆・五成而分周公左・召公右・六成復綴以崇天子夾振之・而驷伐・盛威於中國也・分夾而進・事蚤濟也・久立於綴・以待諸侯之至也. . . 若此・則周道四達・禮樂交通・則夫武之遲久・不亦宜乎・(*Li Ji* Yue Ji p. 705 = *Shi Ji* 24 (Yue Shu) pp. 1226–7)

This account is most useful as a monument to the cosmopolitan Ruist reconstruction of the early Zhou, possibly filtered through earlier Panhuaxia versions of that reconstruction. Seen in this light, and with the necessary cautions against confusing this reading with a historically accurate reenactment of an assumed original performance tradition, I note certain aspects of this imagined performance that the author of this text wishes us to notice. First of these, perhaps, is that the dance has six sections, suggestively paralleling other accounts in

54 There follows a description of Wu's virtuous actions and their imitations in the dance.

which six poems are sung during the dance, though no account of the dance mentions both that it is in six parts and that specific hymns are sung during it.[55]

The author of this passage clearly wishes to give us a more vivid picture of the details of the performance, but he is also establishing his own authority to discuss the dance, which will be crucial to his interpretation of its meaning. Each gesture is seen as having a very specific function, even if that function is not readily apparent. Just as the texts of the poems are, for Ruist interpretations, a field of signifiers waiting to be attached to the appropriate signifieds, so the movements of the dance, obscure though they may be, are seen as directly involved in the mimetic production of meaning. The tradition believed that the dance represented the conquest of Shang and chose among competing narratives of that conquest a version that suited Ruist ideological purposes.

Thus, the initial unswerving stance of the dancers programmatically recalls the might and virtue of King Wu, whereas their later stomping of feet and waving of arms connote warlike intent. Such readings are plausible enough, the point here being rather that it is unclear whether the passage was composed to account for the motions of the dance, or the description of the dance we see here was invented to reinforce the existing message of the text. In either event, the two create a mutually reinforcing interpretative system, linking the narrative of the battle with the mimetic images of the dance and with the interpretation of both that the *Yue Ji* provides. This system is reinforced in the latter part of this passage, where the detailed descriptions of the six stages of the dance are linked to stages in the battle of Muye and its aftermath, notably including the enfeoffment of the Dukes of Zhou and Zhao. Here the representing action is equated very directly with the represented narrative, so that various sections of the dance are described as being the marking of the boundaries of the states of the South and the establishment of the Dukes of Zhao and of Zhou in their respective positions. No attempt is made to describe the

[55] This has not prevented legions of scholars, premodern and modern, from trying to solve the puzzle of which *Hymns* fit each of the six sections, with widely divergent results. See, for example, Wang (1959) 104–8, and the general summary at Sun (1966) 258. Chow (1986) 225 offers a more recent version.

dance actions that are intended to signify these events. Rather, these brief narratives are linked to a more extensive narrative of the battle and its aftermath (not presented here), which grounds the reading of the dance in terms of the reading of the events themselves.

Intriguingly, we are told that Confucius' understanding of the kneeling posture adopted by dancers is incorrect, that the music played is incorrect, and that licentiousness and greed for Shang have improperly been allowed to creep in to the text. Further, the direction of the questioning seems to be critical of the length of the drum roll that depicts a period of preparatory warning. This is interesting on two levels. First, it replicates the anxieties found within the poems themselves. As we have seen, they are full of language that emphasizes issues of continuity, reception of legacy, and inheritance. As befits works that ostensibly are part of the ancestral worship of the royal court, these poems take great care to establish the legitimacy of the house through its inheritance from the past. In like manner, this text expresses the desire that tradition not be lost, that the dance, which claims in origin to represent the defeat of Shang by King Wu, itself be repeated in perpetuity. Each reenactment must be faithful to previous reenactments and, ultimately, to the mythical narrative of the conquest of Shang. Although the poems themselves (read in a modern philological light) suggest a somewhat darker and less noble origin for the Western Zhou, the readings of those poems offered by the Mao school read into the dance an anxiety that early Zhou virtues will not be (or had not been) transmitted; in like fashion, this passage from the *Record of Rites* projects that anxiety onto the performance of the dance itself, making the failed transmission of a performance practice a figure for a failed transmission of virtuous kingly conduct.

On another level, this very anxiety reinforces the text's claim to authenticity and authority. If already in Confucius' time the authenticity of the performance of the *Great King Wu* dance was threatened, then how much more so it must have become by the Former Han! Citing Confucius himself as the authority for this version secures not only the dance itself, but also the text's own reputation and survival. This text marks the establishment of a textual tradition that not only preserves the performance tradition, but even substitutes for it; the description of the *Great King Wu* dance in the *Record of Music* (the title of the chapter is itself suggestive) replaces any actual performance.

The details of how the performance is to be executed are vividly provided, and the meaning to be attached to the performance is set forth with a clarity that actual performance rarely if ever possesses. Even if the performance tradition of the *Great King Wu* dance was lost by the time of the writing of the *Record of Music*, the point still holds. The point is not that the commentary accurately reflects the original intent or practice (whatever and whenever that might have been), but rather that it replaces that intent with an ideological content consonant with the cosmopolitan reading strategies of its time.

Other, more straightforwardly moralistic, readings of the *Great King Wu* dance are found elsewhere in the *Record of Rites* and in the *Offices of Zhou* (Zhou Li, 周禮).[56] The *Record of Rites* passage, from the chapter *King Wen as Heir-Apparent* (Wen Wang Shizi, 文王世子), discusses the proper education of a prince to prepare him for rule, using King Wen and his successors as paradigms for the appropriate conduct of an heir-apparent in the text's present:

> The musicians sang the [*Zhou Hymn*] titled *Pure Temple*. When it had been sung, they spoke in order to complete its meaning. They spoke of the Ways of father and son, lord and minister, grown men and the young. The offering of the unification of the *de* and the sound was the greatest part of the rite. Below, they piped the *Xiang* tune and danced the *Great King Wu* dance, greatly uniting through their tasks, developing the spirits, and stimulating *de*. They rectified the positions of lord and minister, and the ranks of noble and base, and there was a righteous execution of duties by both high and low. Those in charge announced that the music was over, and the king commanded his five ranks of nobles and all the officials, saying, "Return, and nourish old and young in your Eastern Schools." Thus it was brought to a close with benevolence.
>
> 脩之以孝養也・反・登歌清廟・既歌而語・以成之也・言父子君臣長幼之道・合德音之致・禮之大者也・下管象・舞大武・大合以事・達有神・興有德也・正君臣之位・貴賤之等焉・而上下之義行矣・有司告以樂闋・王乃命公侯伯子男及群吏・曰・反養老幼于東序・終之以仁也・(禮記. 文王世子 p. 405)

This passage emphasizes the *Great King Wu* dance's affective-expressive role in the moral education provided at a righteous and well-governed court, especially in establishing proper relations between the different classes of society, rather than its mimetic

[56] I omit further discussion of the *Offices of Zhou* passage (周禮. 春官宗伯. 大司樂 p. 336), whose main emphasis, only slightly different from that of the *Record of Rites* passage below, lies in the capacity of the dance to enhance harmony within and beyond state borders.

function. Given the profoundly mimetic emphasis of other passages describing the dance (as we have seen above), this lack of discussion of *mimêsis*, if meaningful, may suggest merely that the priorities of the author lay elsewhere. The emphasis on proper social roles in the *Record of Rites* passage emphasizes the essential theme of the centrifugal corrective force of proper ritual, including dance, a theme that recurs in discussions of the use of the *Great King Wu* dance in the court of Lu. Note also that the *Record of Rites* passage associates the *Xiang* melody with the *Great King Wu* dance, an association we shall find elsewhere; it makes no reference to the use of particular hymns, let alone any of the hymns we have seen.[57]

In the *Offices of Zhou* passage alluded to above, it is claimed that each of the six dances has its own sacrificial role, each forming part of a Panhuaxia narrative of origins, with the *Great King Wu* dance being reserved for sacrifices to ancestors (周禮 春官宗伯 大司樂 p. 405). Who these ancestors are is a matter for debate. Our commentaries stretch this narrative back to what would come to be the beginning of time – the reign of the Yellow Emperor, retrospectively created to provide the Huaxia peoples with a common ancestor.[58] The text of the passage itself keeps its focus squarely on the Zhou; here, the sequence of dances accompany sacrifices to Heaven, Earth, the four directions, mountains and rivers, the Mother of the Ancestors, and the (Zhou dynastic) ancestors. The question amounts, basically, to the choice between two narratives of Panhuaxia origins: one in which the preceding dynasties are included, and one in which they are not. In any event, because this passage makes it clear that the practice is that followed in the Zhou court, these ancestors presumably include King Wu, but would not be limited to him. This, of course, fits nicely with what we know of the texts of our hymns – which clearly are as much about King Wen as about his son, and which emphasize throughout the importance of dynastic continuity. In performing a *mimêsis* of King Wu's conquest of the Shang, the *Great King Wu* dance honors, not only that originary mythic event, but also (through the reenactments of the myth in ritual through the ages) the entire Zhou royal line.[59]

[57] In fact, none of the *Record of Rites* passages that discuss this dance mention any of our five hymns.

[58] Wang (1999).

[59] Against this must be held the *Zhou Li*'s penchant for correlative numerology – six dances demand six sacrifices.

Moving away from discussions of the proper performance practice for the dance, I turn first to the famous episode in the *Zuozhuan*, in which Jizha of Wu witnesses what appears to be a complete performance of the *Canon of Songs* (Duke Xiang 29 [543 BC] p. 667). What is striking here is that the performance itself has been elided out of the narrative; there are no details of movement or gesture, no references to melody or instrumentation. There is no mention of a ritual context for the dances; even if the compilers of the *Zuozhuan* assume that their readers will infer such a context, their interest clearly lies elsewhere. Further, in this episode the varieties of song are referred to by name: we have the *Airs* of all the regional states notionally constituting the Huaxia world (albeit in a sequence noticeably different from that in our texts).[60] We have the *Minor* and *Major Court Songs* and the *Hymns*, Panhuaxia ritual songs to accompany the epichoric *Airs*. We have, finally, the performance of the five dances, which constitute a narrative of the foundation of the Huaxia people.[61] This episode, then, represents the Lu court in 544 BC (the ostensive date of this anecdote) as a place where these performance practices have new roles beyond those of completing ritual, reenacting history, or instructing the princes. Jizha's responses incorporate an aesthetic dimension, but also a new ideological one; this performance is a strange variant of the diplomatic episodes I discussed in the previous chapter. In those episodes, officials from each state perform poems to suggest their state's position; here, officials from each state form the audience for a performance of the whole collection, and the negotiation seems to be about what sort of epichoric focalization of the *Songs* is appropriate: one in which Lu (a state whose considerable cultural capital belies its political weakness) occupies a mediating position between the Western Zhou past and the Panhuaxia present, or one in which Wu (a non-Huaxia state, but one of considerable military power) can appropriate this past for its own ends.[62]

We do not know in what order the passages I have discussed were written, and, to some extent, this is not even important, because

[60] A point I discuss in Beecroft (under review).

[61] Note that the sequence of dances here differs from that given in the *Grand Master of Music* passage.

[62] For the archaeological parallels, see Falkenhausen (2006) 262–83.

a significant part of the issue is the difference between the *absolute* chronology of composition, which is beyond our grasp, and the *notional* chronology, which each text claims for itself. That is, it matters that the *Zuozhuan* episode involving Jizha is notionally set in 544 BC, even though the anecdote likely assumed its current written form later. Likewise, the *Offices of Zhou*, likely more recent in many respects than the Jizha episode, nonetheless has a very early notional date because it purports to represent the (idealized) bureaucracy of the early Western Zhou. The *Record of Rites* texts diverge considerably even in their notional dates, but many include Confucius as a speaker, which stakes a claim for a period shortly after that of the Jizha episode in the *Zuozhuan*. Put another way, not only are the texts themselves sedimented, but so are the reading strategies they represent. A phase in interpretation of the classics that begins later and lasts longer may seem, from a diachronic perspective, to happen later when, from a synchronic perspective, it may coexist with other interpretations, and portions of that phase may even predate a notionally earlier phase.

What is important, in other words, is neither the dramatic date of each episode, nor even necessarily the (difficult to ascertain) date of composition of each text, bur rather the phase in the imagined history of *Canon of Songs* interpretation each text is designed to represent. Thus, the Jizha episode is constructed to represent a stage where the *Songs* have been canonized and reified as a collection; they cannot (by the logic of this episode) circulate freely in the way they do in other diplomatic exchanges, but must be understood as part of a system where the meaning of any one of the *Songs* is governed in part by its relationship to the collection. In other words, this anecdote, despite its notional date, represents the emergent reading strategies of the cosmopolitan era. By contrast, our *Offices of Zhou* and *Record of Rites* texts, though probably written later, represent an archaizing attempt to recover the canonical significance of the dances, that is, to discover the myth that underlies the mimetic ritual. All of these texts are influenced by cosmopolitan reading strategies, even if they couch those strategies in different terms.

Jizha's interpretation of a performance of this dance at Lu raises the broader question of what it might mean to perform Panhuaxia ritual concerning Zhou origin-myths at any of the regional courts, and especially in Lu. The question is one of centripetal or centrifugal

circulation of the *Songs*; is the dance the exclusive property of the Zhou court, with any attempt to perform it elsewhere representing a usurpation of royal authority, or does Lu, with its inheritance from the Duke of Zhou, held a special dispensation to perform this dance? This debate may have had political overtones for the historical state of Lu, but in our texts we are dealing more with the cosmopolitan commentarial tradition's focalization of the classics through Lu, the home state of Confucius. These issues have been adumbrated with the passage from *King Wen as Heir Apparent*, where we saw that interpreting the dance either as a "mirror for princes" or as ancestral worship had implications led to either a centripetal or centrifugal understanding of Panhuaxia culture, but the point becomes especially acute in the case of Lu.[63]

The *Places in the Bright Hall* (Ming Tang Wei, 明堂位) chapter of the *Record of Rites* argues for Lu's right to use the *Great King Wu* dance. This is a chapter that, despite its title,[64] focuses on ritual practice in Lu and the justification of Lu's appropriation of Zhou practice:

At the end of summer, in the sixth month, they (i.e., the rulers of Lu) used the rites of the Great Summer Sacrifice to sacrifice to the Duke of Zhou in the Great Ancestral Temple . . . .[65] The stands for the meat offerings were in the styles of Shun and of the Xia Dynasty. They went up and sang the *Pure Temple*. Below they piped the *Xiang* tune. They wore the red shields with jade axes and the ceremonial caps and danced the *Great King Wu* dance. They wore leather caps and gathered white robes and silk jackets above their furs and danced the *Great Xia Dynasty* dance. [They also performed] the *Mei*, the music of the eastern Yi barbarians, and the *Ren*, the music of the southern Man barbarians. Incorporating the musics of the Yi and Man in the Grand Temple spoke of the breadth [of respect enjoyed by] Lu throughout all under heaven.

季夏六月，以禘禮祀周公於大廟．．．．俎用梡嶡．升歌清廟．下管象．朱干玉戚．冕而舞大武．皮弁素積．裼而舞大夏．昧．東夷之樂也．任．南蠻之樂也．納夷蠻之樂於大廟．言廣魯於天下也．(禮記．明堂位 p. 577)

[63] I omit here a discussion of the *Single Victim at the Border Sacrifices* (Jiao Te Sheng, 郊特牲) chapter of the *Record of Rites*, which, unlike the other *Rites* passages, seems to oppose Lu's use of the dance, a useful reminder of the status of the classics as sedimentary compilations of disparate materials.

[64] See Lewis (2006) 265–71 on the Bright Hall as a center of Zhou royal court ritual.

[65] Omitted is a discussion of many of the ritual details of the sacrifices at Lu.

This passage suggests that the Lu court borrowed not only the *Great King Wu* dance from the royal Zhou court but also a broad array of Panhuaxia ritual. Somewhat disingenuously, it closes with the suggestion that this ritual usurpation is an index of the esteem in which Lu was held by its peers. A passage from the *General Account of Sacrifices* (Ji Tong, 祭統) in the *Record of Rites* suggests still broader and more serious appropriations, but confers legitimacy on those usurpations through a scene of ritual authorship:

In ancient times Dan, Duke of Zhou, performed meritorious service for all under heaven. When he had died, Kings Cheng and Kang, gratefully remembering his meritorious service, and wishing to honor the state of Lu, therefore bestowed on Lu the major sacrifices. Of the outer sacrifices, they bestowed on Lu the boundary sacrifices to Heaven and Earth, and of the inner sacrifices, they bestowed the great autumn *Chang* and summer *Di* sacrifices. As for the *Chang* and *Di* sacrifices, they ascended and sang the [*Hymn of Zhou*] *Pure Temple*. Below they piped the *Xiang* tune. They wore red shields with jade axes and danced the *Great King Wu* dance. They arrayed themselves in eight rows and danced the *Xia* dance. These were the musics of the Son of Heaven. They saw the Duke of Zhou as strong, and thus bestowed [these rites] upon Lu. His descendants have continued them, and, to this day, they have not perished. This is how they make clear the *de* of the Duke of Zhou, and make great his kingdom.

昔者周公旦 · 有勳勞於天下 · 周公既沒 · 成王 · 康王 · 追念周公之所以勳勞者 · 而欲尊魯 · 故賜之以重祭外祭則郊社是也 · 內祭則大嘗禘是也 · 夫大嘗禘 · 升歌清廟 · 下而管象 · 朱干玉戚以舞大武 · 八佾以舞夏 · 此天子之樂也 · 康周公 · 故以賜魯也 · 子孫纂之 · 至于今不廢 德 · 而又以重其國也 · (禮記 · 祭統 p. 840)

This passage goes beyond the previous one in suggesting that some of the most solemn rituals of the Zhou court (including the sacrifices to Heaven and Earth), were practiced in Lu; its appropriation of ritual from the center is here almost total. The canonical message of these Zhou court rituals then becomes, not merely the commemoration of the founding of the Zhou dynasty, but also the Duke of Zhou's role in consolidating and expanding the dynasty's control over the eastern plains, and his able service as King Cheng's regent. The Duke of Zhou is simultaneously an epichoric hero (as founder of the Lu house) and a Panhuaxia hero (as consolidator of dynastic power and author of parts of the classics). He is also especially significant as the embodiment of Ruist ideologies of benevolent rule. It is difficult to

discern the relationship between these roles: was the Duke of Zhou a Panhuaxia hero appropriated by the Lu court after the collapse of effective royal power, as a means of asserting their own position in the multi-state world of the Eastern Zhou, or was he an epichoric hero in Lu, given minor honors in the Panhuaxia narrative of the founding of the Zhou, but only much later elevated to the culture-hero status of author of the classics? Our sources, late and Ruist (and therefore Lu-ist) as they are, do not make this question easy to resolve.

In sharp contrast to these two passages is a passage in the *Gongyang Commentary* on the *Spring and Autumn Annals*[66] where the Marquis of Qi consoles the Duke of Lu on the latter's flight from his duchy, having been overthrown by the ministerial clans. The Duke is outraged at the usurpation of his prerogatives by these clans, but the Marquis remonstrates with him, arguing that they are merely doing as he himself has done:

"The Marquis of Qi consoled the Duke of Lu at Yejing."[67] How did he console the Duke? Duke Zhao was about to assassinate Ji Yiru. He announced this to Zijia Ju, saying, "Ji Yiru acts without *dao*. He has long usurped others' position in the ducal hall. I wish to assassinate him. How may I do it?" Zijia Ju said, "The lords usurp the Son of Heaven's position, the officials usurp the lords' positions." Duke Zhao said, "How have I usurped, then?" Zijia Ju said, "You have planned two tours of inspection. You have ridden in the Great Carriage. With red shields and jade axes you have performed the *Great Xia Dynasty* dance. In eight rows you have danced the *Great King Wu* dance. These are all the rites of the Son of Heaven. As for the tying-up of his horses and cattle, Ji Yiru has already done it, and he is compliant. Ji Yiru has had the support of the masses for a long time. My lord will not be much disgraced by in this matter."

Duke Zhao did not follow these words. He killed Ji Yiru and was defeated. He escaped to Qi.

齊侯唁公于野井・唁公者何・昭公將弒季氏・告子家駒曰・季氏為無道・僭於公室久矣・吾欲弒之・何如・子家駒曰・諸侯僭於天子・大夫僭於諸侯久矣・昭公曰・吾何僭矣哉・子家駒曰・設兩觀・乘大路・朱干・玉戚・以舞大夏・八佾以舞大武・此皆天子之禮也・且夫牛馬維婁・委己者也・而柔焉・季氏得民眾久矣・君無多辱焉・昭公不從其言・終弒之・而敗焉・走之齊・(*Gongyang*, Duke Zhao 25 [517 BC] p. 145)

[66] Another text, which, like the *Zuozhuan*, is presented as a commentary on the *Spring and Autumn Annals*.

[67] The lemma from the *Spring and Autumn Annals*.

All three of these passages manifest anxieties about the proper performance practice for the *Great King Wu* dance, and in all three cases, the emphasis is on the proper attire for the dancers, in different combinations of red shields, jade axes, and ceremonial caps. Each describes the performance of the dance with a static visual image rather than a description of movement, suggesting the lack of a continuous performance tradition familiar to the writer. On the political level, the arguments made regarding this dance are of considerable significance; these passages represent (likely *post facto*) interventions in key debates about roles and ritual in the declining years of the Zhou.

Neither the *General Account of Sacrifices* passage nor the *Gongyang* passage offers a neutral perspective on the issue: the *General Account of Sacrifices* clearly seeks to embed Lu's ritual claims in historical narrative, whereas the *Gongyang* passage represents a position naturally taken by Qi (a powerful state without Lu's dynastic and ritual claims). Neither of these texts is likely to date to the historical periods they recount; instead, they reenact what might have been a real historical debate in a new context and for new ends. The myth of Lu's privileged position during the Panhuaxia era, in other words, is reenacted in commentarial ritual, where the canonical meaning of the myth (Lu had a special status in the Huaxia world thanks to its connections with the Duke of Zhou) is balanced by the self-referential message of the commentary (because the textual and commentarial links to the Western Zhou ritual past pass through Lu, they are renewed and invigorated by each textual assertion of that canonical myth). The *Gongyang*, of course, offers the opposite perspective on the debate, claiming that royal Zhou ritual belonged at the royal Zhou court. That this message endures in the body of the classics is a testament to the dilemma faced by the Ruists in deriving their authority from their appropriation of the charter-myths of the Zhou. We have already seen that even the extant textual tradition (the *Remnants of Zhou Documents* and the most plausible readings of the *Zhou Hymns*) fails to support the Ruist claim of a just and restrained transfer of power. The gradual decline of the Zhou dynasty, and its eventual collapse, posed a problem for Ruist interpretation, a problem solved through a narrative of dynastic decline, in which the virtue of the dynasty's early stages was gradually dissipated, and in which the loss of that virtue led to a

decline in political power. This narrative had the additional advantage for the Ruists of legitimating the Han dynasty under which they lived as a (notional) return to (imagined) early Western Zhou values.

What, though, to do with a situation like the one described by the *General Account of Sacrifices*, in which royal ritual is usurped by Lu? To reject this usurpation absolutely would suggest that Lu had no special claim to ritual authority and that Confucius did not have privileged access to an authentic transmission of Western Zhou ritual. To accept the ritual usurpation, however, would also be to allow for a disturbing degree of fluidity in the location of the ritual and political center – too much, perhaps, for any cosmopolitan empire to accept. The Ruists needed, in other words, to have it both ways, giving voice to the notion that it was wrong of Lu to take on rituals proper to the Zhou court, but also legitimating the usurpation through the scene of authorship of Kings Cheng and Kang bestowing those rituals on Zhou. A certain negative capability, in other words, can be as useful to politicized ritual specialists as to poets.

We should note, finally, that the Lu usurpation of Panhuaxia ritual goes beyond, in fact, those rituals proper to the royal Zhou court. The *Places in the Bright Hall* passage quoted above claims that, in addition to performing the *Great King Wu* and *Great Xia Dynasty* dances, the Lu court also performs the music of the southern Man and eastern Yi barbarians, in order to spread word throughout the world of Lu's greatness. This is precisely the strategy employed by a cosmopolitan empire – employing the arts of its subject peoples as propaganda demonstrating the universality of its rule. Of course, Lu was never such an empire, nor did it have the powers associated with the Zhou royal court, nor even those associated with one of the regional hegemons of the Spring and Autumn period. Not only, in other words, did Lu have no real power over the Man and Yi, but, inasmuch as it claimed to be using Zhou royal ritual legitimately, it could not even claim to have that power. The appropriation of barbarian ritual projects onto geography the chronological and mythical appropriations we have already discussed. What is supposed to be a centrifugal movement, with music and moral instruction circulating from the Zhou court for the enlightenment of the provinces,[68] becomes instead a centripetal

[68] See the *King Wen as Heir Apparent* passage quoted earlier.

movement with a displaced center, where the music of the known world, and its associated rites, being transferred to Lu for performance there. It is difficult to know what in all of this is authentic to the Eastern Zhou, although its convenience to the cosmopolitan reading strategies of the Ruists is cause enough for skepticism.

Conclusions

In Chapter 4, I explored the crisis that Stesichorus' *Palinode* represented for a Panhellenic mode of thinking. Epichoric lyric frequently contradicted Panhellenic epic, but Stesichorus' contradiction – the suggestion that Helen did not, after all, go to Troy – was absolutely fundamental to the construction of Panhellenic identity around the heroes of the Trojan War. To contest Helen's journey, in other words, contested the entire charter-myth of the Greeks. As we have seen in this chapter, the interpretation and use of the *Great King Wu* dance presented a similarly systemic challenge to (at least the Ruist construction of) Huaxia culture, whose charter-myth was the righteous conquest of the Shang by King Wu. The conquest of the Shang was the subject of many of the *Songs* and the *Documents*, and a prerequisite for the events discussed in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*. Moreover, that conquest provided a major scene of authorship for the *Rites* and the *Changes* as well, in that it was the myth that those texts reenacted in ritual, in ways large and small.[69] If the classics were to be viewed as a system, and for the Ruists they had to be, then the conquest of the Shang was the central node of that system, the one event on which all else depended. The *Great King Wu* dance, as the ritual that most immediately reenacted the conquest, was thus a potential flash point for debates about the system as a whole.

Those debates took many forms. Anxieties about the correct performance practice of the dance, manifested by representing Confucius as unsure on this point, were clearly an issue by the Western Han. One solution taken was to project the dance onto the page, and to use

[69] The origin-myth for the *Changes* goes back further than the foundation of the Zhou; still, the hexagrams were often attributed to King Wen. The *Rites* claim to describe Western Zhou ritual and administration, although most of the material gathered in our three ritual texts is clearly much later.

narrative discussions of the dance as a mimetic reenactment. Our textual descriptions of the dance are diverse, contradictory, and incomplete, utterly insufficient to sustain the weight of interpretation they would have to bear. Accordingly, the Ruists emphasized the *Hymns* that they could connect to the dance. This raised, in turn, difficulties of its own. On the one hand, parts of the tradition (notably the Jizha episode) seem to suggest that the *Zhou Hymns* were distinct from the dances, not merely their verbal component. Negative capability was, perhaps, a sufficient defense against this problem. More seriously, the texts of the poems themselves contradicted the message the Ruists wanted to find in them, hinting at a much darker and more brutal conquest than the one they needed. Considerable philological agility was needed, as we have seen, to reconcile the text of the *Hymns* to the message of stability and order the Ruists sought.

A further layer of difficulties, those pertaining to the use of the dance at the Lu court, were converted into assets by the cosmopolitan reading practices of the Ruists, albeit with some reservations. Rather than see this phenomenon (which may in any event have been merely textual) as an index of the decline of the Zhou, the Ruist tradition was able to read it as a marker of the authenticity of the Western Zhou ritual tradition as practiced at Lu. The Ruist vision of the classics had, in essence, two critical scenes of authorship: one at the conquest of the Shang, when Kings Wen and Wu and the Duke of Zhou were thought to have initiated the classics, and another, half a millennium later, when Confucius transmitted and edited them.

This double-authorship clearly derives in part from fact: certain parts of the *Songs*, the *Documents*, and the *Changes*, at least, do likely date from the early Western Zhou. Moreover, as we have seen, the emergent sense of Huaxia identity in the late Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods certainly meant a reconfiguration of these existing materials (along with newer ones) for new purposes. The *Songs*, the *Documents*, and the *Rites* became the basis of a language of interstate discussion (albeit a nonreferential language whose content is stylized and whose signification is context-dependent) and a means of identifying who did and did not belong in the Huaxia world. The *Documents*, the *Annals*, and the *Changes*, as a group, contributed to a sense of cultural unity through a shared appreciation of patterns of historical behavior. That said, the evidence we have examined in

the last three chapters shows that, for the most part, this Panhuaxia cultural era still viewed the classics, not as closed canons, but as open performance practices, as songs, for example, rather than as *Songs*.

This open-ended, performative, and nonreferential use of the classics gives way to an approach in which the classics are reified, canonized, and textualized. Their meanings are activated, not in performance, but through commentary (which is, as I have suggested, a means of irrevocably fixing the self-referential aspect of ritual, even as the canonical elements were lost, or lapsed into desuetude). This process was likely under way before the Han, but the emergence over the course of that dynasty of the desire for an ideology of rule distinct from the Legalism of the Qin, certainly accelerated matters. The needs of this particular time – to create both an educational system that would define membership in the bureaucratic classes and an ideology to legitimate cosmopolitan imperial rule – were met through the use of the classics, and particularly of the Ruist version of the classics, especially by the Eastern Han.

At this point, it seems, text had already replaced ritual, and had, to some extent, *become* ritual. To this extent, the ritual enacted in the text of the classics, and endlessly reenacted in the commentaries, required a myth, a scene of authorship, in which its practices could ground their meaning. The Ruist conceit of the double scene of authorship (at the founding of the Zhou and by Confucius) allowed them to map many disparate things onto each other: Han and late Warring State ritual texts, Spring and Autumn era historical narratives, songs and speeches and rituals and divination practices stretching back at least a thousand years. The authority of the Han could be secured with reference to the founding of the Zhou, mediated through Confucius. Out of a variety of incoherent practices, creatively used and reused throughout Zhou times, the Ruists were able to construct a coherent historical narrative, and a coherent ideology of power. At many points, as with their contradictory descriptions of the *Great King Wu* dance, they betray their ignorance of the actual practices that their texts claim to reenact. The meanings they generate from the classics will turn out to be dynamic rather than static, shifting endlessly through another two thousand years of commentary and reappropriation. The idea that these ancient practices and texts *could* generate meaning, and in particular *a* meaning, was an idea that would endure.

Conclusion

Scenes of Authorship and Master-Narratives

Poetics, Explicit and Implicit

As we saw in Chapter 1, if we want truly to understand even the *explicit* poetics of either Greece or China, we must pay close attention at every moment to the fact that these poetic treatises are discussing verbal art that even they conceive of as taking life, not on the page, but in performance. I attempt throughout at least to sketch some of the possible directions such attention to performance might take, and some of the insights we might be able to gain thereby. At the same time, and in a related way, I observe that (especially when read with a sensitivity to performance) the poetic traditions of Greece and China are not as distinct as they seem at first. Certainly, elements of the doctrines espoused by the *Poetics* and by the Mao preface are quite distinct, but an examination of the implicit poetics of the scenes of authorship I have discussed throughout the book offer ample evidence to the contrary. The story of Terpander, for example, shows that the Greeks were fascinated with the idea that poetry could regulate human and interstate relations and could be constitutive of the state. The *Great King Wu* dance, likewise, shows that the Chinese were also convinced of the important role verbal art (as one of the performing arts) could play in reenacting foundational cultural myths. Implied poetics, then, is a gateway through which we can recover the affective–expressive dimensions of Greek poetry and the mimetic dimensions of Chinese poetry.

In saying this, I am not invalidating the general notion that *explicit* Chinese poetics is affective–expressive, and *explicit* Greek poetics is mimetic; such is obviously mostly the case. Moreover, the impact of these explicit poetic manifestoes is obviously quite real: two millennia and more of East Asian and European theories of literature have at least had to pay lip service to these notions, and even writers who found these theories of poetics distasteful had to position themselves against them. I will say, however, that to ignore the earlier history of poetics, and the implicit chapters of that history from any time, carries with it real costs. Most importantly, to read these manifestoes as symptomatic of their cultures (even at the time of their composition, never mind earlier or later) is to risk confusing historical contingency with *mentalité*.

In general, then, I would characterize the development of poetics in both cultures in historical terms. Early Greek and Chinese poetics alike is interested in the possibility that art imitates life (that is, that it reenacts myth); both versions of poetics also show concerns for how those reenactments can transform the world around us. The concept of *mimêsis* comes down to us in part through Greek lyric poetry, but explicit poetic theory in both Greece and China tends to neglect the lyric as mimetic. Aristotle's *Poetics*, therefore, deals almost exclusively with drama, and secondarily with epic, leaving lyric altogether outside its purview and therefore hindering our own awareness of the mimetic dimension of lyric. In the case of the *Canon of Songs*, although the *Court Songs* and *Hymns* had to be understood in mimetic terms, the major emphasis in the Panhuaxia era represented by the *Zuozhuan* tended to be on the use of the *Airs of the States* in contexts where performance conferred authority (such as diplomatic negotiations). *Mimêsis* was not excluded, but it was confined to the *Court Songs* and *Hymns*, and early patterns in the use of the *Airs* encouraged nonmimetic readings there, a tendency that bore ultimate fruit in the Mao preface.

In the panchoric stage, then, the differences between Greek and Chinese poetics can be understood as differences in emphasis, rather than as fundamentally distinct worldviews. The two cultures begin to diverge more with the gradual emergence of cosmopolitan reading strategies, represented (for example) by Plato and Aristotle in

Greece,[1] and by the intermediate layers of the *Analects* and of the *Zuozhuan* (both likely from the fourth century BC) in China. As I have shown with Stesichorus, a cosmopolitan figure such as Plato will subvert Panhellenic traditions (sometimes reverting in the process to epichoric narratives) to suit his own purposes; the Panhellenic function of a charter-myth such as the Trojan War as a means of constituting a cultural whole becomes for him secondary to the more abstract goal of establishing abstract moral principles suitable for any or all political or cultural entities.

Such cosmopolitan critics' interests lie in challenging in various ways the link between the representing "this" of ritual and the represented "that" of myth, shifting the meaning of *mimêsis* from reenactment toward representation. They begin, moreover, to question whether what is being represented in poetry is the world as it is, or the world as it appears or might be.[2] As such, Plato and Socrates are clearly interested in the role that poetry might play in constituting the state, and in the rewards or dangers that given representations of myth might have for the state, but for them this is a largely hypothetical question, certainly not a question tied to the prospect of universal empire. Aristotle, famously tutor to Alexander the Great, *did* face the prospect of universal empire, but seems to have paid the prospect little heed: he develops the idea of the total king (*pambasileus*) in the *Politics* (1285b29–33), but seemingly as an afterthought, and although some have interpreted this to refer to a kingship which is territorially universal rather than absolute within its territory, this reading is controversial.[3] In any event, the *polis* continues to be constitutive of Greek identity, even in the truly cosmopolitan context of the Roman empire.[4]

The cosmopolitan Chinese tradition, instead, does emerge specifically within the context of a world empire. Both Panhellenic and Panhuaxia culture emerge in roughly comparable time periods (the

[1] Traces may even be found somewhat earlier: see the discussion of Herodotus' engagement with Hecataeus as a proto-cosmopolitan engagement with a Panhellenic predecessor in Chapter 2.

[2] See Halliwell (2002) 22–4 on *mimêsis* as "world-reflecting" or "world-simulating."

[3] See Nagle (2000).

[4] See, for example, Swain (1996) 72–8.

eighth to sixth centuries BC), and both retrospectively project their origins backward to an also comparable time (the twelfth/eleventh centuries BC provide the traditional timing of both the Trojan War and the Zhou conquest of the Shang). Where the Panhellenic charter-myth of the Trojan War imagines a confederacy of Hellenic allies waging war against a non-Hellenic Other, however, the Panhuaxia charter-myth represents the replacement of a badly functioning and corrupt centralized state (the Shang) by a smoothly working and virtuous one (the Zhou), whose success in defeating the Other is incidental to its capacity to integrate the Huaxia world politically. Panhuaxia cultural narratives, in other words, included at least some notion of a centralized and universal state, even if such a state was the virtual opposite of the reality of the Eastern Zhou. Ultimately, for a variety of reasons, the notion of the city-state was to excite the imagination of the Huaxia world much less than it did the Hellenic world, with the result that the city-state did not remain as a focus of either personal loyalty or of philosophical interest after the disappearance of the political circumstances that had given it birth.[5]

If the Panhuaxia's origins differed from those of the Panhellenic, then its destiny was still more different. Alexander's conquest of the Hellenic world (and beyond) might better be compared to the victories of the Qin than to those of the Han; in both cases a marginal state (Macedonia, Qin) rises to regional prominence through internal reforms, and then makes a bid for universal rule, a bid that cannot survive the death of the conquering ruler (Alexander, Qin Shi Huangdi). The fact that, in the Chinese case, what replaced this short-lived universal empire was another, much more stable, such empire gave the Ruists who were already developing a cosmopolitan model of the ritual tradition the opportunity to sustain themselves by becoming the legitimating ideology of that empire. As such, they were not at all interested in separating ritualized "this" from mythic "that," and in fact sought to make the connection between the two much more immediate. Where Herodotus and Plato, for example, were interested in seeing the past as myth (that is, as a series of narratives that have cultural power but may or may not be true), the Ruists needed to see that mythic past as

[5] See Lewis (2006) 149 for a discussion of this question.

history, in order to legitimate their own political claims. If the history of the Western Zhou was not as they claimed, then their ritual system lost its authority.

When cosmopolitan modes of reading in both Greece and China, in other words, began to think of literature as a phenomenon in its own right, separable from the rest of human experience, they did so in different ways. Where the Greek cosmopolitans began by questioning the factuality of traditional charter-myths, they became preoccupied with the truth-value of literature, and thus with *mimêsis* (i.e., with the extent to which literature truthfully reflected the world), and eventually with the beginnings of a notion of fictionality. In China, by contrast, the readers who gained greatest authority, first among the community of readers and, more importantly, within the state (that is, the Ruists) could not accept the prospect of fictionality and accordingly subsumed the imaginative dimension of literariness under the category of spontaneous self-expression (always a political act for them). Different models of poetics emerged in each culture, with vastly different implications for the development of literature, but in both cases they emerged from similar contexts, in which a variety of similar ideas coexisted, with one approach gradually becoming dominant for historically contingent reasons.

General Conclusions

This theme is in essence the theme of the rest of the book: the emergence (mediated through scenes of authorship) of broader and more abstract notions of literature in a pattern that correlates with changes in the political sphere. By tracing the emergence of the author, I argue, we can also trace the transformation of literary systems. I have already introduced the concept in the introduction, mostly through an enumeration of six possible systems, arranged roughly in the order of their first appearance: epichoric, panchoric, cosmopolitan, vernacular, national, and global. At this point, it might be appropriate to reflect a little more on the concept of the literary system.

In part, my notion of the literary system is designed to escape from the economic metaphors that tend to govern discussions of literary circulation. Elsewhere, I have suggested that contemporary models of world-literature replicate a Wallersteinian axial division of labor

between core and periphery.[6] In suggesting the "literary system" as a new paradigm, I am perhaps moving from an economic metaphor to an ecological one, in which any given literature should be examined in the context of its interaction with its environment. Literatures, I argue, exist in a natural environment (the ambient political and social structures), and also exist in some form of symbiotic relationship with other literatures (whether through a model of mutually beneficial exchange, parasitism, or competition for the same territory).

Over time, some thrive in their environments, whereas others become extinct. These phenomena, to pursue the metaphor, are a result both of changes in the natural environment (new political regimes, say, that are hostile to a particular literature) and of interspecies competition (French and Italian, say, begin to occupy the literary space used by Latin). Often, naturally, a change of literary system is the result of both factors, as perhaps in the case of literary competition between Irish and English. On the largest scale, the theme of this book has been the examination of the forces behind these shifts in literary systems, and particularly the emergence of Greek and Chinese literatures out of the epichoric through the panchoric and into the cosmopolitan. Few literatures have been as successful at thriving in so many environments, and in both cases political factors (and other dimensions of what I am calling the "natural environment") can provide only a partial explanation of this success. I argue, speculatively, that the success enjoyed by both Greek and Chinese literatures in achieving cosmopolitan status owes something to their prior success in negotiating the panchoric environment, in creating, that is, a sense of cultural unity in a politically fragmented and volatile context.

In Greece and China, then, I would argue that verbal art has its origins in authoritative speech-acts, rooted in, and constitutive of, epichoric cultural practice. Lyric poetry, be it the citharody of Terpander or the *Airs of the States*, has the capacity to serve as a culturally integrating force on the local level, whether by expressing shared values or by reenacting foundational myths (or both). The political context of both Archaic Greece and Spring and Autumn era China, in which multitudes of epichoric states coexist with an awareness of cultural

[6] Beecroft (2008b).

Otherness beyond a linguistic frontier, led to the emergence of panchoric institutions, such as the Delphic oracle and the Olympic games in the case of Greece, and assemblages of ritual vessels and varieties of linguistic and behavioral practice in China, which served both to unite those who shared that culture, and to separate them from those outside who did not.

Verbal art played an important role in the emergence of panchoric culture in both places, and in both it took the form of assemblages of epichoric material. As Gregory Nagy and others have documented, Homeric epic represents a Panhellenized version of epichoric myths about the Trojan War,[7] whereas the *Canon of Songs* is a Panhuaxiaized version of epichoric song traditions (combined with ritual songs attached to the central Zhou court, which perform a structurally similar role). In other words, the same material is at once epichoric and panchoric, depending on the perspective from which it is viewed and the use to which it is put. Homeric epic resolves the tensions between epichoric versions of the Trojan War charter-myth on the level of its narrative, selecting and combining elements of epichoric traditions to create its own Panhellenic and authoritative version. At the same time, lyric versions of the same myths can coexist with Panhellenic epic, circulating in different contexts and for different purposes. Similarly, when the songs of the *Canon of Songs* circulate individually, they can apply either to their notional epichoric compositional context (to the extent that one exists), or to a freshly generated epichoric performance context (as in diplomatic negotiations in the *Zuozhuan*). When the songs are thought of as the *Songs*, that is, as a collection, they also tell a Panhuaxia story, of the rise of the Western Zhou, of its travails and collapse, and of the collected experiences of the regional states of the Spring and Autumn period.

Over time, a variety of forces act on these panchoric traditions, exerting a profound and generally consistent effect. The transmission of verbal art is increasingly associated with writing, rather than with performance, which leads (as I have shown) both to the indexicalization of poetic language and consequently to anxieties about how to resolve that indexicality. Musical innovation seems, in both Greece and China, to have exerted a profound alienating influence on

[7] Nagy (1990b) 52–81.

earlier traditions.[8] The emergence of traditions of abstract philosophy, beginning in the fifth century BC in both Greece and China (Jaspers's famous "Axial Age"), led, as we have seen, to new questions about the value and function of literature. The very success of panchoric traditions in forging a shared culture could lead to the neglect of epichoric traditions not easily assimilated to the panchoric narrative. Finally, as the peculiar political circumstances that gave rise to the panchoric themselves yielded to new political forms, new cultural institutions and reading practices became necessary.

Although it is difficult to know to what extent each of these individual forces contributed to change, the cumulative effect of all of them is clear enough. As the panchoric literary system begins to yield to a cosmopolitan one, panchoric cultural assemblages such as Homeric epic and the *Canon of Songs* are increasingly reified as products of an idealized past. They are textualized, canonized, and closed to changes. Performance practices are fading, or have faded, and so has an awareness of the fact of performance as constitutive of meaning. In their place, a new kind of (textual) performance, which I have called the "scene of authorship," arises to contextualize literature and regulate its circulation. These scenes of authorship can have the effect of supplanting any authentic notion of the epichoricity of a given text (if such a thing ever existed) in favor of a normalized and constructed narrative of chronology and locality that renders that text serviceable for the work of representing a world civilization or empire, or an idealized rather than empirical notion of the state. In other words, the scene of authorship is a device by which formerly epichoric or

[8] See, for example, the anecdotes about Terpander's (and others') supernumerary lyre-strings, discussed in Chapter 2, and the account in the *Record of Rites* of the story of the Marquis of Wei's boredom with traditional music and love of the (decadent) music of Zheng and Wei:

> Marquis Wen of Wei asked [Confucius' disciple] Zixia, "When I put on ritual regalia and listen to ancient music then I fear I will want to lie down. When I listen to the music of Zheng and Wei [n.b. not the same Wei of which he is Marquis], I don't experience weariness. Can I ask, why is ancient music this way, and new music that way?
>
> 魏文侯問於子夏曰．吾端冕而聽古樂．則唯恐臥．聽鄭衛之音．則不知倦．敢問古樂之如彼．何也．新樂之如此．何也 (禮記 樂記 p. 686).
>
> In both cases, the use of a more harmonically rich musical scale seems to have added to cultural anxieties about the capacity of music to corrupt.

panchoric texts are able to remain authoritative and constitutive of cultures and values in ever-wider worlds. The birth of the author, then, is at once the death of performance and the emergence of a cultural world empire, a marker of a given literature's capacity to generate meaning far beyond and long after the creation of its central texts. At the largest level, certain scenes of authorship – the composition of Homeric epic, the establishment of Western Zhou ritual, the dialogic teachings of Socrates and Confucius – become the paradigms for cultural master-narratives that have not yet ceased to exert their sway.

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